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THE WEPT
OF
WISH-TON-WISH



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THE WEPT
OF
WISH-TON-WISH
a tale;

BY THE AUTHOR OF THE PIONEERS, PRAIRIE,
ETC. ETC.

"But she is dead to him, to all;
Her lute hangs silent on the wall,
And on the stairs, and at the door,
Her fairy step is heard no more."
Rogers.

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CHAPTER I.

" Oh — when amid the throngs of men
The heart grows sick of hollow mirth,
How willingly we turn us, then,
Away from this cold earth;
And look into thy azure breast,
For seats of innocence and rest."

Bryant's Skies

The day was the Sabbath. This religious festival, which is even now observed in most of the States of the Union with a strictness that is little heeded in the rest of Christendom, was then revered with a severity, suited to the austere habits of the Colonists. The circumstance that one should journey on such a day, had attracted the observation of all in the hamlet, but, as the stranger had been seen to ride towards the dwelling of the

Heathcotes, and the times were known to teem with more than ordinary interests to the Province, it was believed, that he found his justification, in some apology of necessity. Still none ventured forth to inquire into the motive of this extraordinary visit. At the end of an hour, the horseman was seen to depart as he had arrived, seemingly urged on by the calls of some pressing emergency. He had in truth proceeded further with his tidings, though the lawfulness of discharging even this imperious duty on the Sabbath, had been gravely considered in the Councils of those who had sent him. Happily they had found, or thought they had found, in some of the narratives of the sacred volume, a sufficient precedent to bid their messenger proceed.

In the mean time, the unusual excitement, which had been so unexpectedly awakened in the dwelling of the Heathcotes, began to subside in that quiet, which is in so beautiful accordance with

the sacred character of the day. The sun rose bright and cloudless above the hills, every vapour of the past night melting before his genial warmth, into the invisible element. The valley then lay in that species of holy calm, which conveys so sweet and so forcible an appeal to the heart. The world presented a picture of the glorious handy-work of him, who seems to invite the gratitude and adoration of his creatures. To the mind yet untainted, there is exquisite loveliness and even God-like repose in such a scene. The universal stillness permits the softest natural sounds to be heard, and the buzz of the bee, or the wing of the humming-bird reaches the ear like the loud notes of a general anthem. This temporary repose is full of meaning. It should teach how much of the beauty of this world's enjoyments, how much of its peace, and even how much of the comeliness of nature itself, is dependant on the spirit by which we are

actuated. When man reposes, all around him seems anxious to contribute to his rest, and when he abandons the contentions of grosser interests, to elevate his spirit, all living things appear to unite in worship. Although this apparent sympathy of nature may be less true than imaginative, its lesson is not destroyed, since it sufficiently shows that what man chooses to consider good in this world is good, and that most of its strife and deformities proceed from his own perversity.

The tenants of the valley of the Wish-Ton-Wish were little wont to disturb the quiet of the Sabbath. Their error lay in the other extreme, since they impaired the charities of life by endeavouring to raise man altogether above the weakness of his nature. They substituted the revolting aspect of a sublimated austerity, for that gracious though regulated exterior, by which all in the body may best illustrate their hopes, or exhibit their gratitude.

The peculiar air of those of whom we write was generated by the error of the times and of the country, though something of its singularly rigid character might have been derived from the precepts and example of the individual, who had the direction of the spiritual interests of the parish. As this person will have further connection with the matter of the legend, he shall be more familiarly introduced in its pages.

The Rev. Meek Wolfe was, in spirit, a rare combination of the humblest self-abasement, and of fierce spiritual denunciation. Like so many others of his sacred calling, in the Colony he inhabited, he was not only the descendant of a line of priests, but it was his greatest earthly hope that he should also become the progenitor of a race, in whom the ministry was to be perpetuated as severely, as if the regulated formula of the Mosaic dispensation were still in existence. He had been educated in the infant college

of Harvard, an Institution that the emigrants from England had the wisdom and enterprise to found, within the first five and twenty years of their colonial residence. Here this scion of so pious and orthodox a stock, had abundantly qualified himself for the intellectual warfare of his future life, by regarding one set of opinions so steadily, as to leave little reason to apprehend he would ever abandon the most trifling of the outworks of his faith. No citadel ever presented a more hopeless curtain to the besieger, than did the mind of this zealot to the efforts of conviction; for on the side of his opponents, he contrived that every avenue should be closed, by a wall blank as indomitable obstinacy could oppose. He appeared to think that all the minor conditions of argument and reason had been disposed of by his ancestors, and that it only remained for him to strengthen the many defences of his subject, and, no and then, to scatter by a fierce sortie, the

doctrinal skirmishers who might occasionally approach his parish. There was a remarkable singleness of mind in this religionist which, while it in some measure rendered even his bigotry respectable, greatly aided in clearing the knotty subject, with which he dealt, of much embarrassing matter. In his eyes, the strait and narrow path would hold but few besides his own flock. He admitted some fortuitous exceptions, in one or two of the nearest parishes, with whose clergymen he was in the habit of exchanging pulpits, and perhaps, here and there, in a saint of the other hemisphere, or of the more distant towns of the Colonies, the brightness of whose faith was something aided, in his eyes, by distance, as this opaque globe of ours is thought to appear a ball of light to those who inhabit its satellite. In short, there was an admixture of seeming charity, with an exclusiveness of hope, an unweariness of exertion with a coolness of exterior, a

disregard of self, with the most complacent security, and an uncomplaining submission to temporal evils, with the loftiest spiritual pretensions, that in some measure rendered him a man as difficult to comprehend, as to describe.

At an early hour in the forenoon, a little bell, that was suspended in an awkward belfry perched on the roof of the meeting-house, began to summon the congregation to the place of worship. The call was promptly obeyed, and ere the first notes had reached the echoes of the hills; the wide and grassy street was covered with family groupes, all taking the same direction. Foremost in each little party walked the austere father, perhaps bearing on his arm a suckled infant, or some child yet too young to sustain its own weight, while at a decent distance followed the equally grave matron, casting oblique and severe glances at the little troop around her, in whom acquired habits had yet some conquests to obtain

over the lighter impulses of vanity. Where there was no child to need support, or where the mother chose to assume the office of bearing her infant in person, the man was seen to carry one of the heavy muskets of the day; and when his arms were otherwise employed, the stoutest of his boys served in the capacity of armour-bearer. But in no instance was this needful precaution neglected, the state of the Province and the character of the enemy, requiring that vigilance should mingle even with their devotions. There was no loitering on the path, no light and worldly discourse by the way, nor even any salutations, other than those grave and serious recognitions by hat and eye, which usage tolerated as the utmost limit of courtesy, on the weekly festival.

When the bell changed its tone, Meek appeared from the gate of the fortified house, where he resided, in quality of castellan, on account of its public cha-

racter, its additional security, and the circumstance that his studious habits permitted him to discharge the trust with less waste of manual labour, than it would cost the village, were the responsible office confided to one of more active habits. His consort followed, but at even a greater distance than that taken by the wives of other men, as if she felt the awful necessity of averting even the remotest possibility of scandal, from one of so sacred a profession. Nine offspring of various ages, and one female assistant, of years too tender to be a wife herself, composed the household of the divine; and it was a proof of the salubrious air of the valley, that all were present, since nothing but illness was ever deemed a sufficient excuse, for absence from the common worship. As this little flock issued from the palisadoes, a female, in whose pale cheek the effects of recent illness might yet be traced, held open the gate for the entrance of Reuben Ring, and

a stout youth, who bore the prolific consort of the former, with her bounteous gift, into the citadel of the village; a place of refuge that nothing but the undaunted resolution of the woman prevented her from occupying before, since more than half of the children of the valley, had first seen the light within the security of its defences.

The family of Meek preceded him into the temple, and when the feet of the minister himself crossed its threshold, there was no human form visible without its walls. The bell ceased its monotonous and mournful note, and the tall, gaunt form of the divine moved through the narrow aisle to its usual post, with the air of one who had already more than half rejected the burthen of bodily incumbrance. A searching and stern glance was thrown around, as if he possessed an instinctive power to detect all delinquents, and then seating himself, the deep stillness, that always preceeded the exercises, reigned in the place.

When the divine next showed his austere countenance to his expecting people, its meaning was expressive rather of some matter of worldly import, than of that absence of carnal interest, with which he usually strove to draw near to his Creator, in prayer.

"Capt. Content Heathcote," he said with grave severity, after permitting a short pause to awaken reverence, "there has one ridden through this valley, on the Lord's day, making thy habitation his halting place. Hath the traveller warranty for this disrespect of the sabbath, and canst thou find sufficient reason in his motive, for permitting the stranger within thy gates, to neglect the solemn ordinance delivered on the mount?"

"He rideth on especial commission," answered Content, who had respectfully arisen when thus addressed by name; "for matter of grave interest to the well-being of the Colony is contained in the subject of his errand."

“There is naught more deeply connected with the well-being of man, whether resident in this Colony, or in more lofty empires, than reverence to God’s declared will,” returned Meek, but half appeased by the apology. “It would have been expedient for one, who, in common not only setteth so good an example himself, but who is also charged with the mantle of authority, to have looked with distrust, into the pretences of a necessity that may be only seeming.”

“The motive shall be declared to the people, at a fitting moment; but it hath seemed more wise to retain the substance of the horseman’s errand, until worship hath been offered, without the alloy of temporal concerns.”

“Therein hast thou acted discreetly; for a divided mind giveth but little joy above. I hope there is equal reason, why all of thy household are not with thee in the temple?”

Notwithstanding the usual self-com-

mand of Content, he did not revert to this subject without emotion. Casting a subdued glance at the empty seat, where she whom he so much loved was wont to worship at his side, he said, in a voice that evidently struggled to maintain its customary equanimity —

“There has been powerful interest awakened beneath my roof this day; and it may be that the duty of the sabbath has been overlooked, by minds so exercised. If we have therein sinned, I hope he that looketh kindly on the penitent will forgive! She of whom thou speakest, hath been shaken by the violence of griefs renewed; though willing in spirit, a feeble and sinking frame is not equal to support the fatigue of appearing here, even though it be the house of God.”

This extraordinary exercise of pastoral authority was uninterrupted, even by the breathings of the congregation. Any incident of an unusual character had attraction for the inhabitants of a village so

remote , but here was deep , domestic interest, connected with breach of usage and indeed of law , and all heightened by that secret influence that leads us to listen , with singular satisfaction , to those emotions in others , which it is believed to be natural to wish to conceal . Not a syllable that fell from the lips of the divine , or of Content , not a deep tone of severity in the former , nor a struggling accent of the latter , escaped the dullest ear , in that assembly . Nowwithstanding the grave and regulated air that was common to all , it is needless to say there was pleasure in the little interruption of this scene ; which , however , was far from being extraordinary in a community , where it was not only believed that spiritual authority might extend itself to the most familiar practices , but where few domestic interests were deemed so exclusive , or individual feelings considered so sacred , that a very large proportion of the whole neighbourhood might not claim a

right to participate largely in both. The Rev. Mr. Wolfe was appeased by the explanation, and after allowing a sufficient time to elapse, in order that the minds of the congregation should recover their tone, he proceeded with the regular services of the morning.

It is needless to recount the well known manner of the religious exercises of the Puritans. Enough of their forms and of their substance has been transmitted to us, to render both manner and doctrine familiar to most of our readers. We shall therefore confine our duty to a relation of such portions of the ceremonies, if that which sedulously avoided every appearance of form can thus be termed, as have an immediate connection with the incidents.

The divine had gone through the short opening prayer, had read the passage of holy writ, had given out the verses of the psalm, and had joined in the strange nasal melody with which his flock endeavor-

oured to render it doubly acceptable, and had ended his long and fervent wrestling of the spirit in a colloquial petition of some forty minutes duration, in which direct allusion had been made not only to the subject of his recent examination, but to divers other familiar interests of his parishioners, and all without any departure from the usual zeal, on his own part, or of the customary attention and grave decorum, on that of his people. But when, for the second time, he arose to read another song of worship and thanksgiving, a form was seen in the centre, or principal aisle, that, as well by its attire and aspect, as by the unusual and irreverent tardiness of its appearance, attracted general observation. Interruptions of this nature were unfrequent, and even the long practised and abstracted minister paused, for an instant, ere he proceeded with the hymn, though there was a suspicion current among the more instructed of his parishioners, that the so-

norous version was an effusion of his own muse.

The intruder was Whittal Ring. The witless young man had strayed from the abode of his sister, and found his way into that general receptacle, where most of the village was congregated. During his former residence in the valley there had been no temple, and the edifice, its interior arrangements, the faces of those it contained, and the business on which they had assembled, appeared alike strangers to him. It was only when the people lifted up their voices in the song of praise, that some glimmerings of his ancient recollections were discoverable in his inactive countenance. Then, indeed, he betrayed a portion of the delight which powerful sounds can quicken, even in beings of his unhappy mental construction. As he was satisfied, however, to remain in a retired part of the aisle, listening with dull admiration, even the grave Ensign Dudley, whose eye had once or twice

seemed ominous of displeasure, saw no necessity for interference.

Meek had chosen for his text, on that day, a passage from the book of Judges: "And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord; and the Lord delivered them into the hands of Midian seven years." With this text the subtleminded divine dealt powerfully, entering largely into the mysterious and allegorical allusions then so much in vogue. In whatever manner he viewed the subject, he found reason to liken the suffering, bereaved and yet chosen dwellers of the Colonies, to the race of the Hebrews. If they were not set apart and marked from all others of the earth, in order that one mightier than man should spring from their loins, they were led into that distant wilderness, far from the temptations of licentious luxury, or the worldly mindedness of those who built their structure of faith on the sands of temporal honours to preserve the word in purity. As

there appeared no reason on the part of the divine himself, to distrust this construction of the words he had quoted, so it was evident that most of his listeners willingly lent their ears to so soothing an argument.

In reference to Midian, the preacher was far less explicit. That the great father of evil was in some way intended by this allusion, could not be doubted; but in what manner the chosen inhabitants of those regions were to feel his malign influence, was matter of more uncertainty. At times, the greedy ears of those who had long been wrought up into the impression that visible manifestations of the anger, or of the love of Providence, were daily presented to their eyes, were flattered with the stern joy of believing, that the war, which then raged around them, was intended to put their moral armour to the proof, and that out of the triumph of their victories were to flow honour and security to the church.

Then came ambiguous qualificatinos, which left it questionable whether a return of the invisible powers, that had been known to be so busy in the Provinces, were not the judgment intended. It is not to be supposed that Meek himself had the clearest mental intelligence, on a point of this subtlety, for there was something of misty hallucination in the manner in which he treated it, as will be seen by his closing words.

“To imagine that Azazel regardeth the long suffering and steadfastness of a chosen people, with a pleasant eye”, he said, “is to believe that the marrow of righteousness can exist in the carrion of deceit. We have already seen his envious spirit raging in many tragical instances. If required to raise a warning beacon to your eyes, by which the presence of this treacherous enemy might be known, I should say, in the words of one learned and ingenious in this craftiness, that, ‘when a person, having full reason,

doth knowingly and wittingly seek and obtain of the Devil, or any other God, besides the true God Jehovah, an ability to do, or know strange things, which he cannot by his own human abilities arrive unto,' that then he may distrust his gifts and tremble for his soul. And, oh! my brethren, how many of ye cling at this very moment to those tragical delusions, and worship the things of the world, instead of fattening on the famine of the desert, which is the sustenance of them that would live forever. Lift your eyes upward, my brethren —"

"Rather turn them to the earth!" interrupted a deep, authoritative voice from the body of the church; "there is present need of all your faculties to save life, and even to guard the tabernacle of the Lord!"

Religious exercises composed the recreation of the dwellers in that distant settlement. When they met in companies to lighten the load of life, prayer

and songs of praise were among the usual indulgencies of the entertainment. To them, a sermon was like a gay scenic exhibition in other and vainer communities, and none listened to the word with cold and inattentive ears. In literal obedience to the command of the preacher, and sympathising with his own action, every eye in the congregation had been turned towards the naked rafters of the roof, when the unknown tones of him who spoke, broke the momentary delusion. It is needless to say that, by a common movement, they sought an explanation of this extraordinary appeal. The divine became mute, equally with wonder and with indignation.

A first glance was enough to assure all present, that new and important interests were likely to be awakened. A stranger of grave aspect, and of a calm but understanding eye, stood at the side of Whittal Ring. His attire was of the simple guise and homely materials of the

country. Still he bore about his person enough of the equipments of one familiar with the wars of the eastern hemisphere, to strike the senses. His hand was armed with a shining broadsword, such as were then used by the cavaliers of England, and at his back was slung the short carbine of one who battled in the saddle. His mien was dignified, and even commanding, and there was no second look necessary to show, that he was an intruder of a character altogether different, from the moping innocent at his side.

“Why is one of an unknown countenance, come to disturb the worship of the temple?” demanded Meek, when astonishment permitted utterance. “Thrice hath this holy day been profaned by the foot of the stranger, and well may it be doubted whether we live not under an evil agency.”

“Arm, men of the Wish-Ton-Wish! arm, and to your defences!—”

A cry arose without, that seemed to

circle the whole valley; and then a thousand whoops rolled out of the arches of the forest, and appeared to meet in one hostile din above the devoted hamlet. These were sounds that had been too often heard, or too often described, not to be generally understood. A scene of wild confusion followed.

Each man, on entering the church, had deposited his arms at the door, and thither most of the stout borderers were now seen hastening, to resume their weapons. Women gathered their children to their sides, and the wails of horror and alarm were beginning to break through the restraints of habit.

"Peace!" exclaimed the Pastor, seemingly excited to a degree above human emotion. "Ere we go forth, let there be a voice raised to our heavenly father. The asking shall be as a thousand men of war battling in our behalf!

The commotion ceased, as suddenly as if a mandate had been issued from that

place to which their petition was to be addressed. Even the stranger, who had regarded the preparations with a stern but anxious eye, bowed his head, and seemed to join in the prayer, with a devout and confiding heart.

“Lord!” said Meek, stretching his meagre arms, with the palms of the hands open, high above the heads of his flock, “at thy bidding we go forth; with thy aid the gates of hell shall not prevail against us; with thy mercy there is hope in heaven and on earth. It is for thy tabernacle that we shed blood; it is for the word that we contend. Battle in our behalf, King of Kings! send thy heavenly legions to our succour, that the song of victory may be incense at thy altars, and a foul hearing to the ears of the enemy—Amen.”

There was a depth in the voice of the speaker, a supernatural calmness in the tones, and so great a confidence in the support of the mighty ally implored,

that the words went to every heart. It was impossible that Nature should not be powerful within, but a high and exciting enthusiasm began to lift the people, far above its influence. Thus awakened, by an appeal to feelings that had never slumbered, and stimulated by all the moving interests of life, the men of the valley poured out of the temple, in defence of person and fire-side, and, as they believed, of religion and of God.

There was pressing necessity, not only for this zeal, but for all the physical energies of the stoutest of their numbers. The spectacle that met the view, on issuing into the open air, was one that might have appalled the hearts of warriors more practised, and have paralyzed the efforts of men less susceptible to the impressions of a religious excitement.

Dark forms were leaping through the fields, on the hill sides; and all adown the slopes that conducted to the valley, armed savages were seen pouring madly

forward, on their path of destruction and vengeance. Behind them, the brand and the knife had been already used, for the log tenement, the stacks and the out-buildings of Reuben Ring, and of several others who dwelt in the skirts of the settlement, were sending forth clouds of murky smoke, in which forked and angry flames were already flashing fiercely. But danger most pressed still nearer. A long line of fierce warriors was even in the meadows, and in no direction could the eye be turned, that it did not meet with the appalling proof that the village was completely surrounded, by an overwhelming superiority of force.

"To the garrison!" shouted some of the foremost of those who first saw the nature and imminency of the danger, pressing forward themselves in the direction of the fortified house." To the garrison, or we are lost!"

"Hold!" exclaimed that voice which was so strange to the ears of most of

those who heard it, but which spoke in a manner, that by its compass and firmness commanded obedience. "With this mad disorder we are truly lost! Let Capt. Content Heathcote come to my counsels."

Notwithstanding the tumult and confusion, which had now in truth begun to rage fearfully around him, the quiet and self-restrained individual to whom the legal and perhaps moral right to command belonged, had lost none of his customary composure. It was plain by the look of powerful amazement, with which he had at first regarded the stranger, on his sudden interruption of the service, and by the glances of secret intelligence and of recognition they exchanged, that they had met before. But this was no time for greetings or explanations, nor was that a scene in which to waste the precious moments, in useless contests about opinions.

"I am here," said he who was thus

called for; "ready to lead, whither thy prudence and experience shall point the way."

"Speak to the people, and separate the combatants in three bodies of equal strength. One shall press forward to the meadows, and beat back the savage, ere he encircle the palisadoed house; the second shall proceed with the feeble and tender, in their flight to its covers; and with the third — but thou knowest that which I would do with the third. Hasten or we lose all by tardiness."

It was perhaps fortunate that orders so necessary and so urgent, were given to one little accustomed to superfluity of speech. Without offering either commendation, or dissent, Content obeyed. Accustomed to his authority, and conscious of the critical situation of all that was dear, the men of the village yielded an obedience more prompt and effective, than it is usual to meet in soldiers who are not familiar with habits of discipline.

The fighting men were quickly separated in three bodies, consisting of rather more than a score of combatants in each. One, commanded by Eben Dudley, advanced at quick time towards the meadows, in the rear of the fortress, that the whooping body of savages, who were already threatening to cut off the retreat of the women and children, should be checked; while another departed in a nearly opposite direction, taking the street of the hamlet, for the purpose of meeting those who advanced by the southern entrance of the valley. The third and last of these small but devoted bodies, remained stationary, in attendance for more definite orders.

At the moment when the first of these little divisions of force was ready to move, the divine appeared in its front, with an air in which spiritual reliance on the purposes of Providence, and some show of temporal determination, were singularly united. In one hand he bore a bible,

which he raised on high as the sacred standard of his followers, and in the other, he brandished a short broad-sword, in a manner that proved there might be danger in encountering its blade. The volume was open, and at brief intervals the divine read, in a high and excited voice, such passages as accidentally met his eye, the leaves blowing about, in a manner to produce a rather remarkable admixture of doctrine and sentiment. But to these trifling moral incongruities, both the pastor and his parishoners were alike indifferent; their subtle, mental exercises having given birth to a tendency of aptly reconciling all seeming discrepancies, as well as of accommodating the most abstruse doctrines, to the more familiar interests of life.

“Israel and the Philistines had put their battle in array, army against army,” commenced Meek, as the troop he led, began its advance. Then reading at short intervals, he continued, “Behold, I will do

a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle" — "Oh house of Aaron, trust in the Lord; he is thy help and thy shield." "Deliver me, O Lord, from the evil man; preserve me from the violent man" — "Let burning coals fall upon them; let them be cast into the fire; into deep pits, that they rise not again" — "Let the wicked fall into their own nets, whilst that I, withal escape" — "Therefore doth my father love me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again" — "He that hateth me, hateth my father, also" — "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do" — "They have heard that it hath been said, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth" — "For Joshua drew not his hand back, wherewith he stretched out the spear, until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai —". Thus far the words of Meek were intelligible to those who remained, but distance soon confounded the syllables.

Then naught was audible but the yells of the enemy, the tramp of the men, who pressed in the rear of the priest, with a display of military pomp as formidable as their limited means would allow, and those clear high tones, which sounded in the ears and quickened the blood at the hearts of his followers, as though they had been trumpet blasts. In a few more minutes, the little band was scattered behind the covers of the fields, and the rattling of fire arms succeeded to the quaint and characteristic manner of their march.

While this movement was made in front, the party ordered to cover the village was not idle. Commanded by a sturdy yeoman, who filled the office of Lieutenant, it advanced with less of religious display, but with equal activity, in the direction of the South, and the sounds of contention were quickly heard, proclaiming both the urgency of the measure and the warmth of the conflict

In the mean time equal decision, though tempered by some circumstances of deep personal interest, was displayed by those who had been left in front of the church. As soon as the band of Meek had got to such a distance as to promise security to those who followed, the stranger commanded the children to be led towards the fortified house. This duty was performed by the trembling mothers, who had been persuaded, with difficulty, to defer it, until cooler heads should pronounce that the proper moment had come. A few of the women dispersed among the dwellings, in quest of the infirm, while all the boys of proper age were actively employed in transporting indispensable articles from the village, within the palisadoes. As these several movements were simultaneous, but a very few minutes elapsed, between the time when the orders were issued, and the moment when they were accomplished.

“I had intended that thou shouldst

have had the charge in the meadows," said the stranger to Content, when naught remained to be performed, but that which had been reserved for the last of the three little bands of fighting men. "But as the work proceedeth bravely, in that quarter, we will move in company. Why doth this maiden tarry?"

"Truly I know not, unless it may be of fear. There is an opening for thy passage into the fort Martha, with others of thy sex."

"I will follow the fighters, that are about to march to the rescue of them that remain in our habitation," said the girl, in a low but steady voice.

"And how know'st thou that such is the service intended for those here arrayed?" demanded the stranger, with a little show of displeasure that his military purposes should have been anticipated.

"I see it in the countenances of them that tarry," returned the other, gazing furtively towards Mark, who, posted in

the little line, could with difficulty brook a delay which threatened his father's house, and those whom it held, with so much jeopardy.

"Forward!" cried the stranger. "Here is no leisure for dispute. Let the maiden take wisdom, and hasten to the fort. Follow, men stout of heart! or we come too late to the succour."

Martha waited until the party had advanced a few paces, and then, instead of obeying the repeated mandate to consult her personal safety, she took the direction of the armed band.

"I fear me that 'twill exceed our strength," observed the stranger, who marched in front at the side of Content, "to make good the dwelling, at so great distance from further aid."

"And yet the visitation will be heavy, that shall drive us for a second time to the fields for a resting place. In what manner didst get warning of this inroad?"

"The savages believed themselves con-

cealed in the cunning place, where thou know'st that my eye had opportunity to overlook their artifices. There is a Providence in our least seeming calculations: An imprisonment of weary years hath its reward in this warning!"

Content appeared to acquiesce, but the situation of affairs prevented the discourse from becoming more minute.

As they approached the dwelling of the Heathcotes, better opportunity of observing the condition of things, in and around the house, was of course obtained. The position of the building would have rendered any attempt, on the part of those in it, to gain the fort, ere the arrival of assistance, desperately hazardous, since the meadows, that lay between them, were already alive with the ferocious warriors of the enemy. But it was evident that the Puritan, whose infirmities kept him within doors, entertained no such design; for it was shortly apparent that those within, were closing and

barring the windows of the habitation, and that other provisions for defense were in the course of active preparation. The feelings of Content, who knew that the house contained only his wife and father, with one female assistant, were excited to agony, as the party he commanded drew near on one side, at a distance about equal to that of a band of the enemy, who were advancing, diagonally from the woods, on the other. He saw the efforts of those so dear to him, as they had recourse to the means of security provided to repel the very danger which now threatened, and, to his eyes, it appeared that the trembling hands of Ruth had lost their power, when haste and confusion more than once defeated the object of her exertions.

“We must break and, charge or the savage will be too speedy;” he said, in tones that grew thick from breathing quicker, than was wont for one of his calm temperament. “See! they enter the or-

chard; in another minute they will be masters of the dwelling!"

But his companion marched with a firmer step, and looked with a cooler eye. There was, in his gaze, the understanding of a man practised in scenes of sudden danger, and in his mien the authority of one accustomed to command.

"Fear not," he answered; "the art of old Mark Heathcote hath departed from him, or he still knoweth how to make good his citadel against a first onset. If we quit our order, the superiority of concert will be lost, and being few in numbers, defeat will be certain; but with this front, and a fitting steadiness, our march may not be repulsed. To thee, Capt. Content Heathcote, it need not be told, that he who now counsels, hath seen the strife of savages ere this hour."

"I know it well—but dost not see my Ruth, labouring at the ill-fitted shutter

of the chamber! The woman will be slain, in her heedlessness—for, hark! there beginneth the volley of the enemy!”

“No, ’tis he who led my troop in a far different warfare!” exclaimed the stranger, whose form grew more erect, and whose thoughtful and deeply furrowed features, assumed something like the stern pleasure which kindles in the soldier as the sounds of contention increase. “’Tis old Mark Heathcote, true to his breeding and his name! he hath let off the culverin upon the knaves! behold, they are already disposed to abandon one, who speaketh so boldly, and are breaking through the fences, to the left, that we may taste something of their quality. Now, bold Englishmen, strong of hand and stout of heart, you have training in your duty, and you shall not be wanting in example. You have wives and children at hand, looking at your deeds; and there is one above, that taketh note of the manner in which you serve in his

cause. Here is an opening for your skill ; scourge the cannibals with the hand of death ! On, on ; to the onset, and to victory ! ”

CHAPTER II.

Hect. "Is this Achilles!

Achil. I am Achilles.

Hect. Stand fair; I pray thee: let me look on thee.
Troilus and Cressida

It may now be necessary to take a rapid glance at the situation of the whole combat, which had begun to thicken in different parts of the valley. The party led by Dudley, and exhorted by Meek, had broken its order, on reaching the meadows behind the fort, and, seeking the covers of the stumps and fences, it had thrown in its fire with good effect, on the irregular band that pressed into the fields. This decision quickly caused

a change in the manner of the advance. The Indians took to covers, in their turn, and the struggle assumed that desultory but dangerous character, in which the steadiness and resources of the individual are put to the severest trial. Success appeared to vacillate; the white men at one time widening the distance between them and their friends in the dwelling, and, at another, falling back as if disposed to seek the shelter of the palisadoes. Although numbers were greatly in favour of the Indians, weapons and skill supported the cause of their adversaries. It was the evident wish of the former to break in upon the little band that opposed their progress to the village, in and about which they saw that scene of hurried exertion, which has already been described; a spectacle but little likely to cool the furious ardour of an Indian onset. But the wary manner in which Dudley conducted his battle, rendered this an experiment of exceeding hazard.

However heavy of intellect the Ensign might appear on other occasions, the present was one every way adapted to draw out his best and most manly qualities. Of large and powerful stature, he felt, in moments of strife, a degree of confidence in himself, that was commensurate with the amount of physical force he wielded. To this hardy assurance was to be added no trifling portion of the sort of enthusiasm, that can be awakened in the most sluggish bosoms, and which, like the anger of an even-tempered man, is only the more formidable from the usually quiet habits of the individual. Nor was this the first by many, of Ensign Dudley's warlike deeds. Besides the desperate affair, already related in these pages, he had been engaged in divers hostile expeditions against the Aborigines, and on all occasions had he shown a cool head and a resolute mind.

There was pressing necessity for both these essential qualities, in the situation in

which the Ensign now found himself. By properly extending his little force, and yet keeping it, at the same time, perfectly within supporting distance, by emulating the caution of his foes in consulting the covers, and by reserving a portion of his fire throughout the broken and yet well-ordered line, the savages were finally beaten back, from stump to stump, from hillock to hillock, and fence to fence, until they had fairly entered the margin of the forest. Further, the experienced eye of the borderer saw he could not follow. Many of his men were bleeding, and growing weaker, as their wounds still flowed. The protection of the trees gave the enemy too great an advantage, for their position to be forced, and destruction would have been the inevitable consequence of the close struggle, which must have followed a charge. In this stage of the combat, Dudley began to cast anxious and inquiring looks behind him. He saw that support was not to be expect-

ed, and he also saw, with regret, that many of the women and children were still busy, transporting necessaries from the village into the fort. Falling back to a better line of covers, and to a distance that materially lessened the danger of the arrows, the weapons used by quite two thirds of his enemies, he awaited, in sullen silence, the proper moment to effect a further retreat.

It was while the party of Dudley stood thus at bay, that a fierce yell rung in the arches of the forest. It was an exclamation of pleasure, uttered in the wild manner of those people; as if the tenants of the woods were animated by some sudden and general impulse of joy. The crouching yeomen regarded each other in uneasiness, but seeing no sign of wavering in the steady mien of their leader, each man kept close, awaiting some further exhibition of the devices of their foes. Ere another minute had passed, two warriors appeared at the margin of the

wood, where they stood apparently in contemplation of the different scenes that were acting in various parts of the valley. More than one musket was leveled with intent to injure them, but a sign from Dudley prevented attempts that would most probably have been frustrated, by the never slumbering vigilance of a North American Indian.

There was however something in the air and port of these two individuals, that had its share in producing the forbearance of Dudley. They were evidently both chiefs, and of far more than usual estimation. As was common with the military leaders of the Indians, they were men also of large and commanding stature. Viewed at the distance from which they were seen, one seemed a warrior who had reached the meridian of his days, while the other had the lighter step, and more flexible movement of a much briefer existence. Both were well armed, and, as was usual with people of their origin on

the war-palh, they were clad only in the customary scanty covering of waist-cloths and leggings. The former, however, were of scarlet, and the latter were rich in the fringes and bright colours of Indian ornaments. The elder of the two wore a gay belt of wampum around his head, in the form of a turban, but the younger appeared with a shaven crown, on which nothing but the customary, chivalrous scalp-lock was visible.

The consultation, like most of the incidents that have been just related, occupied but a very few minutes. The eldest of the chiefs issued some orders. The mind of Dudley was anxiously endeavouring to anticipate their nature, when the two disappeared together. The Ensign would now have been left entirely to vague conjectures, had not the rapid execution of the mandates that had been issued to the youngest of the Indians, soon left him in no doubt of their intentions. Another loud and general shout

drew his attention towards the right, and when he had endeavoured to strengthen his position, by calling three or four of the best marksmen to that end of his little line, the youngest of the chiefs was seen bounding across the meadow, leading a train of whooping followers to the covers that commanded its opposite extremity. In short, the position of Dudley was completely turned; and the stumps and angles of the fences, which secreted his men, were likely to become of no further use. The emergency demanded decision. Collecting his yeomen, ere the enemy had time to profit by his advantage, the Ensign ordered a rapid retreat towards the fort. In this movement he was favoured by the formation of the ground, a circumstance that had been well considered on the advance, and in a very few minutes the party found itself safely posted under the protection of a scattering fire from the palisades, which immediately checked the pursuit of the

whooping and exulting foe. The wounded men, after a stern or rather sullen halt, that was intended to exhibit the unconquerable determination of the whites, withdrew into the works for succour, leaving the command of Dudley reduced, by nearly one half of its number. With this diminished force, however, he promptly turned his attention towards the assistance of those, who combatted at the opposite extremity of the village.

Allusion has already been made to the manner in which the houses of a new settlement were clustered near each other, at the commencement of the colonial establishments. In addition to the more obvious and sufficient motive, which has given rise to the same inconvenient and unpicturesque manner of building, over nine tenths of the continent of Europe, there had been found a religious inducement for the inconvenient custom. One of the enactments of the Puritans said, that, "no man shall set his dwelling-house,

above the distance of half a mile, or a mile at farthest, from the meeting of the congregation, where the church doth usually assemble for the worship of God.” “The support of the worship of God, in church fellowship,” was the reason alleged for this arbitrary provision of the law, but it is quite probable that support against danger, of a more temporal character, was another motive. There were those within the fort who believed the smoking piles that were to be seen, here and there, in the clearings on the hills, owed their destruction to a disregard of that protection, which was thought to be yielded to those who leaned with the greatest confidence, even in the forms of earthly transactions, on the sustaining power of an all-seeing and all-directing Providence. Among this number was Reuben Ring, who submitted to the loss of his habitation, as to a merited punishment for the light-mindedness, that had tempted him to erect a dwelling

at the utmost limits of the prescribed distance.

As the party of Dudley retreated, that sturdy yeoman stood at a window of the chamber, in which his prolific partner with her recent gift were safely lodged, for in that moment of confusion, the husband was compelled to discharge the double duty of sentinel and nurse. He had just fired his piece, and he had reason to think with success, on the enemies that pressed too closely on the retiring party, and as he reloaded the gun, he turned a melancholy eye on the pile of smoking embers, that now lay where his humble but comfortable habitation had so lately stood.

"I fear me, Abundance," he said, shaking his head with a sigh, "that there was error in the measurement between the meeting and the clearing. Some misgivings of the lawfulness of stretching the chain, across the hollows, came over me at the time, but the pleasant

knoll, where the dwelling stood, was so healthful and commodious, that, if it were a sin, I hope it is one that is forgiven! There doth not seem so much as the meanest of its logs, that is not now melted into white ashes, by the fire!"

"Raise me, husband," returned the wife, in the weak voice natural to her feeble situation; "raise me with thine arm, that I may look upon the place where my babes first saw the light."

Her request was granted, and, for a minute, the woman gazed in mute grief at the destruction of her comfortable home. Then as a fresh yell from the foe rose on the air without, she trembled, and turned with a mother's care, towards the unconscious beings that slumbered at her side.

"Thy brother hath been driven by the heathen to the foot of the palisadoes," observed the other, after regarding his companion with manly kindness for a moment, "and he hath lessened his force by many that are wounded."

A short but eloquent pause succeeded. The woman turned her tearful face upwards, and stretching out a bloodless hand, she answered —

“ I know what thou wouldst do—It is not meet that Sergeant Ring should be a woman-tender, when the Indian enemy is in his neighbour's fields! Go to thy duty, and that which is to be done, do manfully! and yet would I have thee remember how many there are, who lean upon thy life for a father's care. ”

The yeoman first cast a cautious look around him, for this the decent and stern usages of the Puritans exacted, and perceiving that the girl who occasionally entered to tend the sick was not present, he stooped, and impressing his lips on the cheek of his wife, he threw a yearning look at his offspring, shouldered his musket, and descended to the court.

When Reuben Ring joined the party of Dudley, the latter had just issued an order to march to the support of those

who still stoutly defended the southern entrance of the village. The labour of securing necessities was not yet ended, and it was on every account an object of the last importance to make good the hamlet against the enemy. The task, however, was not as difficult as the force of the Indians might, at first, have given reason to believe. The conflict, by this time, had extended to the party which was headed by Content, and, in consequence, the Indians were compelled to contend with a divided force. The buildings themselves, with the fences and out-houses, were so many breast-works, and it was plain that the assailants acted with a caution and concert, that betrayed the direction of some mind, more highly gifted, than those which ordinarily fall to the lot of uncivilized men.

The task of Dudley was not so difficult, as before, since the enemy ceased to press upon his march, preferring to watch the movements of those who held the

fortified house, of whose numbers they were ignorant, and of whose attacks they were evidently jealous. As soon as the reinforcement reached the Lieutenant who defended the village, he commanded the charge, and his men advanced with shouts and clamour, some singing spiritual songs, others lifting up their voices in prayer, while a few availed themselves of the down-right and perhaps equally effective means of raising sounds as fearful as possible. The whole being backed by spirited and well directed discharges of musketry, the effort was successful. In a few minutes the enemy fled, leaving that side of the valley momentarily free from danger.

Pursuit would have been folly. After posting a few look-outs, in secret and safe positions among the houses, the whole party returned, with an intention of cutting off the enemy, who still held the meadows near the garrison. In this design, however, their intentions were

frustrated. The instant they were pressed, the Indians gave way, evidently for the purpose of gaining the protection of the woods, and when the whites returned to their works, they were followed in a manner to show that they could make no further movement, without the hazard of a serious assault. In this condition the men, in and about the fort, were compelled to be inefficient spectators of the scene that was taking place around the "Heathcote-house," as the dwelling of old Mark was commonly called.

The fortified building had been erected for the protection of the village and its inhabitants, an object that its position rendered feasible; but it could offer no aid to those who dwelt without the range of musketry. The only piece of artillery belonging to the settlement, was the culverin, which had been discharged by the Puritan, and which served, for the moment, to check the advance of his enemies. But the exclamations of the

stranger, and the appeal to his men, with which the last chapter closed, sufficiently proclaimed that the attack was diverted from the house, and that work of a bloody character now offered itself to those he and his companion led.

The ground around the dwelling of the Heathcotes admitted of closer and more deadly conflict, than that on which the other portions of the combat had occurred. Time had given size to the orchards, and wealth had multiplied and rendered more secure, the enclosures and outbuildings. It was in one of the former that the hostile parties met, and came to that issue, which the warlike stranger had foreseen.

Content, like Dudley, caused his men to separate, and they threw in their fire, with the same guarded reservation that had been practised by the other party. Success again attended the efforts of discipline; the whites gradually beating back their enemies, until there was a

probability of forcing them entirely into the open ground in their rear, a success that would have been tantamount to a victory. But at this flattering moment, yells were heard behind the leaping and whooping band, that was still seen gliding through the openings of the smoke, resembling so many dark and malignant spectres acting their evil rites. Then, as a chief with a turbaned head, terrific voice and commanding stature appeared in their front, the whole of the wavering line received an onward impulse. The yells redoubled; another warrior was seen brandishing a tomahawk on one flank, and the whole of the deep phalanx came rushing in upon the whites, threatening to sweep them away, as the outbreking torrent carries desolation in its course.

“Men, to your square!” shouted the stranger, disregarding cover and life, together, in such a pressing emergency; “to your square, Christians, and be firm!”

The command was repeated by Content, and echoed from mouth to mouth. But before those on the flanks could reach the centre, the shock had come. All order being lost, the combat was hand to hand, one party fighting fiercely for victory, and the other knowing that they stood at the awful peril of their lives. After the first discharge of the musket and the twang of the bow, the struggle was maintained with knife and axe; the thrust of the former, or the descent of the keen and glittering tomahawk, being answered by sweeping and crushing blows of the musket's butt, or by throttling grasps, of hands that were clenched in the death-gripe. Men fell on each other in piles, and when the conqueror rose to shake off the bodies of those who gasped at his feet, his frowning eye rested alike on friend and enemy. The orchard rang with the yells of the Indians, but the Colonists fought in mute despair. Sullen resolution only gave

way with life, and it happened more than once that fearful day, that the usual reeking token of an Indian triumph was swung before the stern and still conscious eyes of the mangled victim, from whose head it had been torn.

In this frightful scene of slaughter and ferocity, the principal personages of our legend were not idle. By a tacit but intelligent understanding, the stranger with Content and his son placed themselves back to back, and struggled manfully against their luckless fortune. The former showed himself no soldier of parade, for knowing the uselessness of orders, when each one fought for life, he dealt out powerful blows, in silence. His example was nobly emulated by Content; and young Mark moved limb and muscle with the vigorous activity of his age. A first onset of the enemy was repelled, and for a moment there was a faint prospect of escape. At the suggestion of the stranger, the three moved, in their order,

towards the dwelling, with the intention of trusting to their personal activity, when released from the throng. But at this luckless instant, when hope was beginning to assume the air of probability, a chief came stalking through the horrible *mêlée*, seeking on each side some victim for his uplifted axe. A crowd of the inferior herd pressed at his heels, and a first glance told the assailed, that the decisive moment had come.

At the sight of so many of their hated enemies still living, and capable of suffering, a common and triumphant shout burst from the lips of the Indians. Their leader, like one superior to the more vulgar emotions of his followers, alone approached in silence. As the band opened and divided to encircle the victims, chance brought him, face to face, with Mark. Like his foe, the Indian warrior was still in the freshness and vigour of young manhood. In stature, years and agility the antagonists seemed equal; and,

as the followers of the chief threw themselves on the stranger and Content, like men who knew their leader needed no aid, there was every appearance of a fierce and doubtful struggle. But, while neither of the combatants shewed any desire to avoid the contest, neither was in haste to give the commencing blow. A painter, or rather a sculptor, would have seized the attitudes of these young combatants for a rich exhibition of the power of his art.

Mark, like most of his friends, had cast aside all superfluous vestments ere he approached the scene of strife. The upper part of his body was naked to the shirt, and even this had been torn asunder, by the rude encounters through which he had already passed. The whole of his full and heaving chest was bare, exposing the white skin and blue veins of one whose fathers had come from towards the rising sun. His swelling form rested on a leg, that seemed planted

in defiance, while the other was thrown in front, like a lever to control the expected movements. His arms were extended to the rear, the hands grasping the barrel of a musket, which threatened death to all who should come within its sweep. The head, covered with the short, curling, yellow hair of his Saxon lineage, was a little advanced above the left shoulder, and seemed placed in a manner to preserve the equipoise of the whole frame. The brow was flushed, the lips compressed and resolute, the veins of the neck and temples swollen nearly to bursting, and the eyes contracted, but of a gaze that bespoke equally the feelings of desperate determination, and of entranced surprise.

On the other hand, the Indian warrior was a man still more likely to be remarked. The habits of his people had brought him, as usual, into the field, with naked limbs and nearly uncovered body. The position of his frame was

that of one prepared to leap, and it would have been a comparison tolerated by the license of poetry, to have likened his straight and agile form, to the semblance of a crouching panther. The projecting leg sustained the body, bending under its load more with the free play of muscle and sinew, than from any weight, while the slightly stooping head was a little advanced beyond the perpendicular. One hand was clenched on the helve of an axe, that lay in a line with the right thigh, while the other was placed, with a firm gripe, on the buck-horn handle of a knife, that was still sheathed at his girdle. The expression of the face was earnest, severe and perhaps a little fierce, and yet the whole was tempered by the immoveable and dignified calm of a chief of high qualities. The eye, however, was gazing and rivetted, and, like that of the youth whose life he threatened, it appeared singularly contracted with wonder.

The momentary pause that succeeded the movement, by which the two antagonists threw themselves into these fine attitudes, was full of meaning. Neither spoke, neither permitted play of muscle, neither even seemed to breathe. The delay was not like that of preparation, for each stood ready for his deadly effort, nor would it have been possible to trace in the compressed energy of the countenance of Mark, or in the lofty and more practised bearing of the front and eye of the Indian, any thing like wavering of purpose. An emotion foreign to the scene appeared to possess them both, each active frame unconsciously accommodating itself to the bloody business of the hour, while the inscrutable agency of the mind held them, for a brief interval, in check.

A yell of death, from the mouth of a savage, who was beaten to the very feet of his chief, by a blow of the stranger, and an encouraging shout from the lips

of the latter, broke the short trance. The knees of the chief bent still lower, the head of the tomahawk was a little raised, the blade of the knife was seen glittering from its sheath, and the butt of Mark's musket had receded to the utmost tension of his sinews, when a shriek and a yell, different from any before heard that day, sounded near. At the same moment, the blows of both the combatants were suspended, though by the agency of very different degrees of force. Mark felt the arms of one cast around his limbs, with a power sufficient to embarrass, though not to subdue him, while the well known voice of Whittal Ring sounded in his ears —

“Murder the lying and hungry Pale-Faces! They leave us no food but air; no drink but water!

On the other hand, when the chief turned, in anger, to strike the daring one who presumed to arrest his arm, he saw at his feet the kneeling figure, the

uplifted hands, and agonized features of Martha. Averting the blow that a follower already aimed at the life of the suppliant, he spoke rapidly in his own language, and pointed to the struggling Mark. The nearest Indians cast themselves on the already half captured youth. A whoop brought a hundred more to the spot, and then a calm as sudden, and almost as fearful, as the previous tumult, prevailed in the orchard. It was succeeded by the long drawn, frightful, and yet meaning, yell by which the American warrior proclaims his victory.

With the end of the tumult in the orchard, the sounds of strife ceased in all the valley. Though conscious of the success of their enemies, the men in the fort saw the certainty of destruction, not only to themselves, but to those feeble ones they should be compelled to leave without a sufficient defence, were they to attempt a sortie, to that distance from

their works. They were therefore compelled to remain passive and grave spectators of an evil they had not the means to avert.

CHAPTER III.

"Were such things here, as we do speak about?
Or have we eaten of the insane root,
That takes the reason prisoner?"

Macbeth

An hour later presented a different Scene. Bands of the enemy, that in civilized warfare would be called parties of observation, lingered in the skirts of the forest nearest to the village, and the settlers still stood to their arms posted among the buildings, or maintaining their array at the foot of the palisadoes. Though the toil of securing the valuables continued, it was evident that, as the first terrors of alarm had disappeared, the owners

of the hamlet began to regain some assurance, in their ability to make it good against their enemies. Even the women were now seen moving through its grassy street with greater seeming confidence, and there was a regularity in the air of the armed men, which denoted a determination that was calculated to impose on their wild and undisciplined assailants.

But the dwelling, the out-buildings, and all the implements of domestic comfort, which had so lately contributed to the ease of the Heathcotes, were completely in the possession of the Indians. The open shutters and doors, the scattered and half destroyed furniture, the air of devastation and waste, and the general abandonment of all interest in the protection of the property proclaimed the licentious disorder of a successful assault. Still the work of destruction and plunder did not go on. Although here and there might be seen some warrior, decorated,

according to the humours of his savage taste, with the personal effects of the former inmates of the building, every hand had been checked, and the furious tempers of the conquerors had been quieted, seemingly by the agency of some unseen and extraordinary authority. The men, who so lately had been moved by the fiercest passions of our nature, were suddenly restrained, if not appeased, and instead of that exulting indulgence of vengeance, which commonly accompanies an Indian triumph, the warriors stalked about the buildings and through the adjacent grounds, in a silence which, though gloomy and sullen, was marked by their characteristic submission to events.

The principal leaders of the inroad, and all the surviving sufferers by the defeat, were assembled in the piazza of the dwelling. Ruth, pale, sorrowing, and mourning for others rather than for herself, stood a little apart, attended by Martha and the young assistant, whose

luckless fortune it was to be found at her post, on this eventful day. Content, the stranger, and Mark were near, subdued and bound, the sole survivors of all that band they had so recently led into the conflict. The gray hairs and bodily infirmities of the Puritan spared him the same degradation. The only other being present, of European origin, was Whittal Ring. The innocent stalked slowly among the prisoners, sometimes permitting ancient recollections and sympathies to come over his dull intellect, but oftener taunting the unfortunate, with the injustice of their race, and with the wrongs of his adopted people.

The chiefs of the successful party stood in the centre, apparently engaged in some grave deliberation. As they were few in number, it was evident that the council only included men of the highest importance. Chiefs of inferior rank, but of great names in the limited renown of those simple tribes, conversed in knots,

among the trees, or paced the court, at a respectful distance from the consultation of their superiors.

The least practised eye could not mistake the person of him, on whom the greatest weight of authority had fallen. The turbaned warrior, already introduced in these pages, occupied the centre of the groupe, in the calm and dignified attitude of an Indian, who hearkens to, or who utters advice. His musket was borne by one who stood in waiting, while the knife and axe were returned to his girdle. He had thrown a light blanket, or it might be better termed a robe of scarlet cloth over his left shoulder, whence it gracefully fell in folds, leaving the whole of the right arm free, and most of his ample chest exposed to view. From beneath this mantle, blood fell slowly in drops, dying the floor on which he stood. The countenance of this warrior was grave, though there was a quickness in the movements of an ever

restless eye, that denoted great mental activity, no less than the disquiet of suspicion. One skilled in physiognomy might too have thought, that a shade of suppressed discontent was struggling with the self-command of habits, that had become part of the nature of the individual.

The two companions nearest this chief were, like himself, men past the middle age, and of mien and expression, that were similar though less strikingly marked; neither showing those signs of displeasure, which occasionally shot from organs that, in spite of a mind so trained and so despotic, could not always restrain their glittering brightness. One was speaking, and by his glance, it was evident that the subject of his discourse was the fourth and last of their number, who had placed himself in a position that prevented his being an auditor of what was said.

In the person of the latter chief, the reader will recognize the youth who had

confronted Mark, and whose rapid movement on the flank of Dudley had first driven the Colonists from the meadows. The eloquent expression of limb, the tension of sinews, and the compression of muscles, as last exhibited, were now gone. They had given place to the peculiar repose, that distinguishes the Indian warrior in his moments of inaction, quite as much as it marks the manner of one schooled in the forms of more polished life. With one hand he leaned lightly on a musket, while from the wrist of the other, which hung loose at his side, depended, by a thong of deer's sinew, a tomahawk from which fell drops of human blood. His person bore no other covering than that in which he had fought, and, unlike his more aged companion in authority, his body had escaped without a wound.

In form and in features, this young warrior might be deemed a model of the excellence of Indian manhood. The limbs

were full, round, faultlessly straight, and distinguished by an appearance of extreme activity, without being equally remarkable for muscle. In the latter particular, in the upright attitude, and in the distant and noble gaze, which so often elevated his front, there was a close affinity to the statue of the Pythian Apollo, while in the full, though slightly effeminate chest, there was an equal resemblance to that look of animal indulgence, which is to be traced in the severe representations of Bacchus. This resemblance however to a Deity that is little apt to awaken lofty sentiments in the spectator, was not displeasing, since it, in some measure, relieved the sternness of an eye that penetrated like the glance of the eagle, and that might otherwise have left an impression of too little sympathy with the familiar weaknesses of humanity. Still the young chief was less to be remarked by this peculiar fullness of chest, the fruit of intervals of

inaction, constant indulgence of the first wants of Nature, and a total exemption from toil, than most of those, who either counselled in secret near, or paced the grounds about the building. In him, it was rather a point to be admired, than a blemish, for it seemed to say that notwithstanding the evidences of austerity which custom, and perhaps character, as well as rank, had gathered in his air, there was a heart beneath that might be touched by the charities of humanity. On the present occasion, the glances of his roving eye, though searching and full of meaning, were evidently weakened by an expression, that betrayed a strange and unwonted confusion of mind.

The conference of the three was ended, and the warrior with a turbaned head advanced towards his captives, with the step of a man whose mind had come to a decision. As the dreaded chief drew near, Whittal retired, stealing to the side of the younger warrior, in a manner

that denoted greater familiarity and perhaps greater confidence. A sudden thought lighted the countenance of the latter. He led the innocent to the extremity of the piazza, spoke low and earnestly, pointing to the forest, and when he saw that his messenger was already crossing the fields, at the top of his speed, he moved, with calm dignity, into the centre of the groupe, taking his station so near his friend, that the folds of the scarlet blanket brushed his elbow. Until this movement the silence was not broken. When the great chief felt the passage of the other, he glanced a look of hesitation at his friends, but resuming his former air of composure, he spoke.

“Man of many winters,” he commenced, in an English that was quite intelligible, while it betrayed a difficulty of speech we shall not attempt imitating, “why hath the Great Spirit made thy race like hungry wolves; why hath a Pale-Face the stomach of a buzzard, the throat of

a hound, and the heart of a deer? Thou hast seen many meltings of the snow: thou rememberest the young tree a sapling. Tell me; why is the mind of a Yengeese so big, that it must hold all that lies between the rising and the setting sun? Speak, for we would know the reason, why arms so long are found on so little bodies?"

The events of that day had been of a nature, to awaken all the latent energies of the Puritan. He had lifted up his spirit, with the morning, in the customary warmth with which he ever hailed the Sabbath; the excitement of the assault had found him sustained above most earthly calamities, and while it quickened feelings that can never become extinct in one who has been familiar with martial usages, it left him, stern in his manhood, and exalted in his sentiments of submission and endurance. Under such influences, he answered with an austerity that equalled the gravity of the Indian.

"The Lord hath delivered us into the bonds of the heathen," he said, "and yet his name shall be blessed beneath my roof! Out of evil shall come good, and from this triumph of the ignorant shall proceed an everlasting victory!"

The chief gazed intently at the speaker, whose attenuated frame, venerable face and long locks, aided by the hectic of enthusiasm that played beneath a glazed and deep set eye, imparted a character that seemed to rise superior to human weakness. Bending his head, in superstitious reverence, he turned gravely to those, who, appearing to possess more of the world in their natures, were more fitting subjects for the designs he meditated.

"The mind of my father is strong, but his body is like a branch of the scorched hemlock!" was the pithy declaration with which he prefaced his next remark. "Why is this?" he continued, looking severely at the three who had

so lately been opposed to him in deadly contest. "Here are men with skins like the blossom of the dog-wood, and yet their hands are so dark, that I cannot see them!"

"They have been blackened by toil, beneath a burning sun," returned Content, who knew how to discourse in the figurative language of the people in whose power he found himself. "We have laboured, that our women and children might eat."

"No—the blood of red men hath changed their colour."

"We have taken up the hatchet, that the land which the Great Spirit hath given, might still be ours, and that our scalps might not be blown about in the smoke of a wigwam. Would a Narragansett hide his arms, and tie up his hands, with the war-whoop ringing in his ears?"

When allusion was made to the ownership of the valley, the blood rushed into the cheek of the warrior in such a

flood, that it deepened even the natural swarthy hue; but clenching the handle of his axe convulsively, he continued to listen, like one accustomed to entire self-command.

“What a red-man does may be seen,” he answered, pointing with a grim smile towards the orchard; exposing, by the movement of the blanket, as he raised his arm, two of the reeking trophies of victory attached to his belt. “Our ears are open very wide. We listen, to hear in what manner the hunting grounds of the Indian have become the ploughed fields of the Yengeese. Now let my wise men hearken, that they may grow more cunning, as the snows settle on their heads. The pale-men have a secret to make the black seem white!”

Narragansett—”

“Wompanoag!” interrupted the chief, with the lofty air with which an Indian identifies himself with the glory of his people—then glancing a milder look at

the young warrior at his elbow, he added, hastily, and in the tone of a courtier; " 'tis very good—Narragansett, or Wompanoag — Wompanoag, or Narragansett. The red men are brothers and friends. They have broken down the fences between their hunting grounds, and they have cleared the paths, between their villages, of briars. What have you to say to the Narragansett; he has not yet shut his ear."

"Wompanoag, if such be thy tribe," resumed Content, "thou shalt hear that which my conscience teacheth is language to be uttered. The God of an Englishman is the God of men of all ranks, and of all time." His listeners shook their heads doubtingly, with the exception of the youngest chief, whose eye never varied its direction while the other spoke, each word appearing to enter deep within the recesses of his mind. "In defiance of these signs of blasphemy, do I still proclaim the power of him I worship!"

Content continued; "My God, is thy God; and he now looketh equally on the deeds, and searcheth, with inscrutable knowledge, into the hearts of both. This earth is his footstool; yonder heaven his throne! I pretend not to enter into his sacred mysteries, or to proclaim the reason, why one half of his fair work hath been so long left, in that slough of ignorance and heathenish abomination in which my fathers found it; why these hills never before echoed the songs of praise, or why the vallies have been so long mute. These are truths hid in the secret designs of his sacred purpose, and they may not be known, until the last fulfilment. But a great and righteous spirit hath led hither men, filled with the love of truth and pregnant with the designs of a heavily burthened faith, inasmuch as their longings are for things pure, while the consciousness of their transgressions bend them, in deep humility, to the dust. Thou bringest against

us the charge of covetting thy lands, and of bearing minds filled with the corruption of riches. This cometh of ignorance of that which hath been abandoned, in order that the spirit of the godly might hold fast to the truth. When the Yengeese came into this wilderness, he left behind him all that can delight the eye, please the senses, and feed the longing of the human heart, in the country of his fathers: for fair as is the work of the Lord, in other lands, there is none that is so excellent as that from which these pilgrims in the wilderness have departed. In that favoured isle, the earth groaneth with the abundance of its products; the odours of its sweet savours salute the nostrils, and the eye is never wearied in gazing at its loveliness. — No — the men of the Pale-Faces have deserted home, and all that sweeteneth life, that they might serve God; and not at the instigations of craving minds, or of evil vanities!”

Content paused, for as he grew warm with the spirit by which he was animated, he had insensibly strayed from the closer points of his subject. His conquerors maintained the decorous gravity, with which an Indian always listens to the speech of another, until he had ended; and then the Great Chief, or Wompanoag, as he had proclaimed himself to be, laid a finger lightly on the shoulder of his prisoner, as he demanded —

“Why have the people of the Yengeese lost themselves on a blind path? If the country they have left is pleasant, cannot their God hear them from the wigwams of their fathers. See; if our trees are but bushes, leave them to the red man; he will find room beneath their branches to lie in the shade. If our rivers are small, it is because the Indians are little. If the hills are low and the vallies narrow, the legs of my people are weary, with much hunting, and they will journey among them the easier.

Now what the Great Spirit hath made for a red man, a red man should keep. They whose skins are like the light of the morning should go back towards the rising sun, out of which they have come to do us wrong."

The chief spoke calmly, but it was like a man much accustomed to deal in the subtleties of controversy, according to the fashion of the people to whom he belonged.

"God hath otherwise decreed," said Content. "He hath led his servants hither, that the incense of praise may arise from the wilderness."

"Your Spirit is a wicked Spirit. Your ears have been cheated. The counsel that told your young men to come so far, was not spoken in the voice of the Manitou. It came from the tongue of one that loves to see game scarce, and the squaws hungry. Go — you follow the mocker, or your hands would not be so dark."

“I know not what injury may have been done the Wompanoags, by men of wicked minds, for some such there are, even in the dwellings of the well disposed; but wrong to any hath never come from those that dwell within my doors. For these lands, a price hath been paid; and what is now seen of abundance in the valley, hath been wrought by much labour. Thou art a Wompanoag, and dost know that the hunting grounds of thy tribe have been held sacred, by my people. Are not the fences standing, which their hands placed, that not even the hoof of colt should trample the corn; and when was it known that the Indian came for justice against the trespassing ox, and did not find it?”

“The moose doth not taste the grass at the root; he liveth on the tree! He doth not stoop to feed on that, which he treadeth under foot! Does the hawk look for the Musquito? His eye is too big. He can see a bird. Go—when the deer have

been killed, the Wompanoags will break down the fence with their own hands. The arm of a hungry man is strong. A cunning Pale-Face hath made that fence; it shutteth out the colt, and it shutteth in the Indian. But the mind of a warrior is too big; it will not be kept at grass with the ox."

A low but expressive murmur of satisfaction, from the mouths of his grim companions, succeeded this reply of the chief.

"The country of thy tribe is far distant," returned Content, "and I will not lay untruth to my soul, by presuming to say whether justice, or injustice hath been done them, in the partition of the lands. But in this valley hath wrong never been done to the red man. What Indian hath asked for food, and not got it? If he hath been a-thirst, the cider came at his wish; if he hath been a-cold, there was a seat by the hearth; and yet hath there been reason why the hatchet should be

in my hand, and why my foot should be on the war-path! For many seasons we lived on lands, which were bought of both red and white man, in peace. But though the sun shone clear so long, the clouds came, at last. There was a dark night fell upon this valley, Wompanoag, and death and the brand entered my dwelling, together. Our young men were killed, and——our spirits were sorely tried.”

Content paused, for his voice became thick, and his eye had caught a glimpse of the pale and drooping countenance of her who leaned on the arm of the still excited and frowning Mark for support. The young chief listened with a charmed ear. As Content had proceeded, his body was inclined a little forward, and his whole attitude was that which men unconsciously assume, when intensely occupied in listening to sounds of the deepest interest.

“But the sun rose again!” said the

great chief, pointing at the evidences of prosperity which were every where apparent in the settlement, casting at the same time an uneasy and suspicious glance at his youngest companion. "The morning was clear, though the night was so dark. The cunning of a Pale-Face knows how to make corn grow on a rock. The foolish Indian eats roots, when crops fail and game is scarce."

"God ceased to be angry ;" returned Content meekly, folding his arms in a manner to show he wished to speak no more.

The great chief was about to continue, when his younger associate laid a finger on his naked shoulder, and, by a sign, indicated that he wished to hold communication with him apart. The former met the request with respect, though it might be discovered that he little liked the expression of his companion's features, and that he yielded with reluctance, if not with disgust. But the countenance

of the youth was firm, and it would have needed more than usual hardihood to refuse a request seconded by so steady and so meaning an eye. The elder spoke to the warrior nearest his elbow, addressing him by the name of Annawon, and then by a gesture so natural and so dignified, that it might have graced the air of a courtier, he announced his readiness to proceed. Notwithstanding the habitual reverence of the Aborigines for age, the others gave way for the passage of the young man, in a manner to proclaim that merit, or birth, or both, had united to purchase for him a personal distinction, which far exceeded that shown, in common, to men of his years. The two chiefs left the piazza in the noiseless manner of the moccasined foot.

The passage of these dignified warriors towards the grounds in the rear of the dwelling, as it was characteristic of their habits, is worthy of being mentioned. Neither spoke, neither manifested any

womanish impatience to pry into the musings of the other's mind, and neither failed in those slight, but still sensible courtesies, by which the path was rendered commodious and the footing sure. They had reached the summit of the elevation, so often named, ere they believed themselves sufficiently retired, to indulge in a discourse which might otherwise have enlightened profane ears. When beneath the shade of the fragrant orchard which grew on the hill, the senior of the two stopped, and throwing about him one of those quick, nearly imperceptible, and yet wary glances, by which an Indian understands his precise position, as it were by instinct, he commenced the dialogue. The discourse was in the dialect of their race, but as it is not probable that many who read these pages would be much enlightened, were we to record it in the precise words in which it has been transmitted to us, a translation into English, as freely as the

subject requires, and the geniuses of the two languages will admit, shall be attempted

“What would my brother have?” commenced he with the turbaned head, uttering the guttural sounds in the low, soothing tones of friendship, and even of affection. “What troubles the Great Sachem of the Narragansetts? His thoughts seem uneasy. I think there is more before his eye, than one whose sight is getting dim can see. Doth he behold the spirit of the brave Miantonimoh, who died, like a dog, beneath the blows of cowardly Pequots, and false-tongued Yengeese? Or does his heart swell, with longing, to see the scalps of treacherous Pale-Faces hanging at his belt? Speak, my son, the hatchet hath long been buried, in the path between our villages, and thy words will enter the ears of a friend.”

“I do not see the spirit of my father,” returned the young Sachem; “he is a far off, in the hunting grounds of just war-

riors. My eyes are too weak to look over so many mountains, and across so many rivers. He is chasing the moose in grounds, where there are no briars; he needeth not the sight of a young man to tell him which way the trail leadeth. Why should I look at the place where the Pequot and the Pale-Face took his life! The fire which scorched this hill, hath blackened the spot, and I can no longer find the marks of blood."

"My son is very wise; cunning beyond his winters! That which hath been once revenged, is forgotten. He looks no further than six moons. He sees the warriors of the Yengeese coming into his village, murdering his old women, and slaying the Narragansett girls; killing his warriors from behind, and lighting their fires with the bones of red men. I will now stop my ears, for the groans of the slaughtered, make my soul feel weak."

"Wompanoag," answered the other, with a fierce flashing of his eagle eye,

and laying his hand firmly on his breast, "the night the snows were red with the blood of my people, is here! my mind is dark: none of my race have since looked upon the place where the lodges of the Narragansetts stood, and yet it hath never been hid from our sight. Since that time have we travelled in the woods, bearing on our backs all that is left but our sorrow; that we carry in our hearts."

"Why is my brother troubled? There are many scalps among his people, and see, his own tomahawk is very red! Let him quiet his anger, till the night cometh, and there will be a deeper stain on the axe. I know he is in a hurry, but our councils say it is better to wait for darkness, since the cunning of the Pale-Faces is too strong for the hands of our young men."

"When was a Narragansett slow to leap, after the whoop was given; or unwilling to stay, when men of gray heads

say 'tis better'. I like your council; it is full of wisdom. Yet an Indian is but a man! Can he fight with the God of the Yengeese. He is too weak. An Indian is but a man, though his skin be red!"

"I look into the clouds, at the trees, among the lodges," said the other, affecting to gaze curiously at the different objects he named, "but I cannot see the white Manitou. The pale men were talking to him, when we raised the whoop in their fields, and yet he has not heard them. Go; my son has struck their warriors with a strong hand; has he forgotten to count how many dead lie among the trees with the sweet smelling blossoms?"

"Metacom," returned he who has been called the Sachem of the Narragansetts, stepping cautiously nearer to his friend, and speaking lower, as if he feared an invisible auditor; "thou hast put hate into the bosoms of the red men, but canst thou make them more cunning than the

Spirits! Hate is very strong, but cunning hath a longer arm. See," he added, raising the fingers of his two hands before the eyes of his attentive companion, "ten snows have come and melted, since there stood a lodge of the Pale-Faces, on this hill. Conanchet was then a boy. His hand had struck nothing but deer. His heart was full of wishes. By day he thought of Pequot scalps, at night he heard the dying words of Miantonimoh. Though slain by cowardly Pequots and lying Yengeese, his father came with the night into his wigwam, to talk to his son. 'Does the child of so many great Sachems grow big,' would he say; 'is his arm getting strong, his foot light, his eye quick, his heart valiant? Will Conanchet be like his fathers; when will the young Sachem of the Narragansetts become a man?' Why should I tell my brother of these visits! Metacom hath often seen the long line of Wompanoag Chiefs in his sleep? The brave Sachems sometimes

enter into the heart of their son?"

The lofty-minded, though wily, Philip struck his hand heavily on his naked breast, as he answered;—

"They are always here. Metacom has no soul but the spirit of his fathers!"

"When he was tired of silence, the murdered Miantonimoh spoke aloud," continued Conanchet, after permitting the customary courteous pause to succeed the emphatic words of his companion. "He bade his son arise, and go among the Yengeese, that he might return with scalps to hang in his wigwam; for the eyes of the dead chief liked not to see the place so empty. The voice of Conanchet was then too feeble for the council-fire; he said nothing, he went alone. An evil spirit gave him into the hands of the Pale-Faces. He was a captive many moons. They shut him in a cage, like a tamed panther! It was here. The news of his ill luck passed from the mouths of the young men of the Yengeese, to the

hunters; and from the hunters it came to the ears of the Narragansetts. My people had lost their Sachem, and they came to seek him. Metacom, the boy had felt the power of the God of the Yengeese! His mind began to grow weak; he thought less of revenge; the spirit of his father came no more at night. There was much talking with the unknown God; and the words of his enemies were kind. He hunted with them. When he met the trail of his warriors in the woods, his mind was troubled, for he knew their errand. Still he saw his father's spirit and waited. The whoop was heard that night; many died, and the Narragansetts took scalps. Thou seest this lodge of stone, over which fire has passed. There was then a cunning place above, and in it, the pale men went to fight for their lives. But the fire kindled, and then there was no hope. The soul of Conanchet was moved at that sight, for there was much honesty in them within. Though

their skins were so white, they had not slain his father. But the flames would not be spoken to, and the place became like the coals of a deserted council-fire. All within were turned to ashes. If the spirit of Miantonimoh rejoiced, it was well; but the soul of his son was very heavy. The weakness was on him, and he no longer thought of boasting of his deeds at the war-post."

"That fire scorched the stain of blood from the Sachem's plain!"

"It did. Since that time I have not seen the marks of my father's blood. Gray heads and boys were in that fire, and when the timbers fell, nothing was left but coals. Yet do they, who were in the blazing lodge, stand there!"

The attentive Metacom started, and glanced a hasty look at the ruin.

"Does my son see spirits in the air?" he asked hastily.

"No, they live; they are bound for the torments. In the white head, is he

who talked much with his God. The elder chief, who struck our young men so hard, was then also a captive in this lodge. He who spoke, and she, who seems even paler than her race, died that night; and yet are they now here! Even the brave youth, that was so hard to conquer, looks like a boy that was in the fire! The Yengeese deal with unknown Gods; they are too cunning for an Indian!"

Philip heard this strange tale, as a being educated in superstitious legends would be apt to listen, and yet it was with a leaning to incredulity, that was generated by his fierce and indomitable desire for the destruction of the hated race. He had prevailed in the councils of his nation, over many similar signs of the supernatural agency that was exercised in favor of his enemies, but never before had facts so imposing, come so directly and from so high a source before his mind. Even the proud resolution and far-sighted wisdom of this

sagacious chief were shaken, by such testimony, and there was a single moment, when the idea of abandoning a league that seemed desperate, took possession of his brain. But true to himself and his cause, second thoughts and a firmer purpose restored his resolution, though they could not remove the perplexity of his doubts.

“What does Conanchet wish?” he said. “Twice have his warriors broke into this valley, and twice have the tomahawks of his young men been redder than the head of the woodpecker. The fire was not good fire; the tomahawk will kill surer. Had not the voice of my brother said to his young men, ‘let the scalps of the prisoners alone,’ he could not now say, ‘yet do they now stand here!’”

“My mind is troubled, friend of my father. Let them be questioned, artfully, that the truth be known.”

Metacom mused an instant; then smi-

ling, in a friendly manner, on his young and much moved companion, he made a sign to a youth who was straying about the fields, to approach. This young warrior was made the bearer of an order to lead the captives to the hill, after which the two chiefs stalked, to and fro, in silence, each brooding over what had passed, in a humour that was suited to his particular character and more familiar feelings.

CHAPTER IV.

No withered witch shall here be seen ,
No goblins lead their nightly crew ;
The female fays shall haunt the green
And dress thy grave with pearly dew
Collins

It is rare indeed that the philosophy of a dignified Indian is so far disturbed, as to destroy the appearance of equanimity. When Content and the family of the Heathcotes appeared on the hill, they found the chiefs still pacing the orchard, with the outward composure of men unmoved, and with the gravity that was suited to their rank. Annawon, who had acted as their conductor, caused the captives to be placed in a row, choosing the

foot of the ruin for their position, and then he patiently awaited the moment, when his superiors might be pleased to renew the examination. In this habitual silence, there was nothing of the abject air of Asiatic deference. It proceeded from the habit of self-command, which taught the Indian to repress all natural emotions. A very similar effect was produced by the religious abasement of those whom Fortune had now thrown into their power. It would have been a curious study, for one interested in the manners of the human species, to note the difference between the calm, physical and perfect self-possession of the wild tenants of the forest, and the ascetic, spiritually sustained, and yet meek submission to Providence, that was exhibited by most of the prisoners. We say of most, for there was an exception. The brow of young Mark still retained its frown, and the angry character of his eye was only lost, when by chance it

lighted on the drooping form and pallid features of his mother. There was ample time for these several and peculiar qualities to be thus silently exhibited, many minutes passing, before either of the Sachems seemed inclined to recommence the conference. At length Philip, or Metacom, as we shall indifferently call him, drew near and spoke.

"This earth is a good earth," he said; "it is of many colours, to please the eyes of him who made it. In one part it is dark, and as the worm taketh the colour of the leaf on which he crawls, there the hunters are black; in another part it is white, and that is the part where pale men were born, and where they should die; or they may miss the road which leads to their happy, hunting grounds. Many just warriors, who have been killed on distant war-paths, still wander in the woods, because the trail is hid, and their sight dim. It is not good to trust so much to the cunning of —"

“Wretched and blind worshipper of Appollyon!” interrupted the Puritan, “we are not of the idolatrous and foolish minded! It hath been accorded to us to know the Lord; to his chosen worshippers all regions are alike. The spirit can mount, equally, through snows and whirlwinds; the tempest and the calm; from the lands of the sun, and the lands of frosts; from the depths of the ocean, from fire, from the forest;—”

He was interrupted, in his turn. At the word fire, the finger of Metacom fell meaningly on his shoulder; and when he had ceased, for until then no Indian would have spoken, the other gravely asked—

“And when a man, of a pale skin, hath gone up in the fire, can he again walk upon earth? Is the river between this clearing and the pleasant fields of a Yengeese so narrow, that the just men can step across it, when they please?”

“This is the conceit of one wallowing

in the slough of heathenish abominations! Child of ignorance! know that the barriers which separate heaven from earth are impassable; for what purified being could endure the wickedness of the flesh!"

"This is a lie of the false Pale-Faces," said the wily Philip; "it is told that the Indian might not learn their cunning, and become stronger than a Yengeese. My father, and those with him, were once burnt in this lodge, and now he standeth here, ready to take the tomahawk!"

"To be angered at this blasphemy, would ill denote the pity that I feel," said Mark, more excited at the charge of necromancy, than he was willing to own; "and yet to suffer so fatal an error to spread among these deluded victims of Satan, would be neglect of duty. Thou hast heard some legend of thy wild people, man of the Wompanoags, which may heap double perdition on thy soul, lest thou shouldst happily be rescued

from the fangs of the deceiver. It is true, that I and mine were in exceeding jeopardy, in this tower, and that to the eyes of men, without, we seemed melted with the heat of the flames ; but the Lord put it into our spirits to seek refuge, whither fire could not come. The well was made the instrument of our safety, for the fulfilment of his own inscrutable designs."

Notwithstanding the long practised and exceeding subtlety of the listeners, they heard this simple explanation, of that which they had deemed a miracle, with a wonder that could not readily be concealed. Delight at the excellence of the artifice was evidently the first and common emotion of them both, nor would they yield implicit faith, until assured, beyond a doubt, that what they heard was true. The little iron door, which had permitted access to the well, for the ordinary domestic purposes of the family, was still there, and it was only

after each had cast a look down the deep shaft, that he appeared satisfied of the practicability of the deed. Then a look of triumph gleamed in the swarthy visage of Philip, while the features of his associate expressed equally his satisfaction and his regret. They walked apart, musing on what they had just seen and heard, and when they spoke, it was again in the language of their people.

"My son hath a tongue that cannot lie," observed Metacom, in a soothing, flattering accent. "What he hath seen he tells; and what he tells, is true. Conanchet is not a boy, but a chief whose wisdom is gray, while his limbs are young. Now, why shall not his people take the scalps of these Yengeese, that they may never go any more into holes in the earth, like cunning foxes?"

"The Sachem hath a very bloody mind," returned the young chief, quicker than was common for men of his station. "Let the arms of the warriors

rest, till they meet the armed hands of the Yengeese, or they will be too tired to strike heavily. My young men have taken scalps, since the sun came over the trees, and they are satisfied—Why does Metacom look so hard? What does my father see?”

“A dark spot in the middle of a wide plain. The grass is not green; it is red as blood. It is too dark for the blood of a Pale-Face. It is the rich blood of a great warrior. The rains cannot wash it out; it grows darker every sun. The snows do not whiten it; it hath been there many winters. The birds scream as they fly over it; the wolf howls; the lizards creep another way.”

“Thine eyes are getting old; fire hath blackened the place, and what thou seest is coal.”

“The fire was kindled in a well; it did not burn bright. What I see, is blood.”

“Wampanoag,” rejoined Conanchet,

fiercely," I have scorched the spot with the lodges of the Yengeese. The grave of my father is covered with scalps taken by the hand of his son — Why does Metacom look again? What does the Chief see?

"An Indian town burning in the midst of the snow. The young men struck from behind; the girls screaming; the children broiling on coals, and the old men dying like dogs! It is the village of the cowardly Pequots — No, I see better; the Yengeese are in the country of the Great Narragansett, and the brave Sachem is there, fighting! I shut my eyes for smoke blinds them!"

Conanchet heard this allusion to the recent and deplorable fate of the principal establishment of his tribe, in sullen silence; for the desire of revenge, which had been so fearfully awakened, seemed now to be slumbering, if it were not entirely quelled, by the agency of some mysterious and potent feeling. He rolled his

eyes gloomily, from the apparently abstracted countenance of his artful companion, to those of the captives, whose fate only awaited his judgment, since the band which had that morning broken in upon the Wish-Ton-Wish, was, with but few exceptions, composed of the surviving warriors of his own powerful nation. But, while his look was displeased, faculties that were schooled so highly, could not easily be mistaken, in what passed, even in the most cursory manner, before his sight.

“What sees my father, next?” he asked with an interest he could not controul, detecting another change in the features of Metacom.

“One who is neither white, nor red. A young woman that boundeth like a skipping fawn; who hath lived in a wigwam, doing nothing; who speaks with two tongues; who holds her hands before the eyes of a great warrior, till he is blind as the owl in the sun—I see her;—”

Metacom paused, for at that moment a being that singularly resembled this description appeared before him, offering the reality of the imaginary picture he was drawing with so much irony and art.

The movement of the timid hare is scarce more hurried, or more undecided, than that of the creature, who now suddenly presented herself to the warriors. It was apparent, by the hesitating and half retreating step, that succeeded the light bound with which she came in view, that she dreaded to advance, while she knew not how far it might be proper to retire. For the first moment, she stood in a suspended and doubting posture, such as one might suppose a creature of mist would assume ere it vanished, and then meeting the eye of Conanchet, the uplifted foot retouched the earth, and her whole form sunk into the modest and shrinking attitude of an Indian girl, who stood in the presence

of a Sachem of her tribe. As this female is to enact no mean part in that which follows, the reader may be thankful for a more minute description of her person.

The age of the stranger was under twenty. In form she rose above the usual stature of an Indian maid, though the proportions of her person were as light and buoyant, as at all comported with the fullness that properly belonged to her years. The limbs, seen below the folds of a short kirtle of bright, scarlet cloth, were just and tapering, even to the nicest proportions of classic beauty; and never did foot of higher instep, and softer roundness, grace a feathered moccasin. Though the person, from the neck to the knees, was hid, by a tightly fitting vest of calico and the short kirtle named, enough of the shape was visible to betray outlines, that had never been injured, either by the mistaken devices of art, or by the baneful effects of toil. The skin was only visible at the hands, face and

neck. Its lustre having been a little dimmed by exposure, a rich, rosy tint had usurped the natural brightness of a complexion, that had once been fair, even to brilliancy. The eye was full, sweet, and of a blue, that emulated the sky of evening; the brows soft and arched; the nose, straight, delicate and slightly Grecian, the forehead fuller than that which properly belonged to a girl of the Narragansetts, but regular, delicate and polished; and the hair, instead of dropping in long straight tresses of jet black, broke out of the restraints of a band of beaded wampum, in ringlets of golden yellow.

The peculiarities, that distinguished this female from the others of her tribe, were not confined alone to the indelible marks of nature. Her step was more elastic; her gait more erect and graceful; her foot less inwardly inclined, and her whole movements freer and more decided, than those of a race doomed, from infancy, to subjection and labour. Though

ornamented by some of the prized inventions of the hated race to which she evidently owed her birth, she had the wild and timid look of those with whom she had grown into womanhood. Her beauty would have been remarkable, in any region of the earth, while the play of muscle, the ingenuous beaming of the eye, and the freedom of limb and action were such as seldom pass beyond the years of childhood, among people who, in attempting to improve, so often mar the works of nature.

Although the colour of the eye was so very different from that which generally belongs to one of Indian origin, the manner of its quick and searching glance, and of the half alarmed and yet understanding look with which this extraordinary creature made herself mistress of the more general character of the assemblage, before which she had been summoned, was like the half instinctive knowledge of one accustomed to the

constant and keenest exercise of her faculties. Pointing with a finger towards Whittal Ring, who stood a little in the back ground, a low, sweet voice was heard asking in the language of the Indians;—

“Why has Conanchet sent for his woman, from the woods?”

The young Sachem made no reply; an ordinary spectator could not have detected about him, even a consciousness of the speaker's presence. On the contrary, he maintained the lofty reserve of a chief engaged in affairs of moment. However deeply his thoughts might have been troubled, it was not easy to trace any evidence of the state of his mind, in the calmness of features that appeared habitually immoveable. For a single, treacherous instant, only, was a glance of kindness shot towards the timid and attentive girl, and then throwing the still bloody tomahawk into the hollow of one arm, while the hand of the other firmly grasped its handle, he re-

mained unchanged in feature, as he was rigid in limb. Not so, with Philip. When the intruder first appeared, a dark and lowering gleam of discontent gathered at his brow. It quickly changed to a look of sarcastic and biting scorn.

“Does my brother again wish to know what I see?” he demanded, when sufficient time had passed, after the unanswered question of the female, to show that his companion was not disposed to answer.

“What does the Sachem of the Wampanoags now behold?” returned Conan-chet, proudly; unwilling to show that any circumstance had occurred to interrupt the subject of their conference.

“A sight that his eyes will not believe. He sees a great tribe on the war-path. There are many braves, and a chief whose fathers came from the clouds. Their hands are in the air; they strike heavy blows; the arrow is swift and the bullet

is not seen to enter, but it kills. Blood runs, from the wounds, that is of the colour of water. Now he does not see, but he hears! 'Tis the scalp-whoop, and the warriors are very glad. The chiefs in the happy hunting grounds are coming, with joy, to meet Indians that are killed; for they know the scalp-whoop of their children."

The expressive countenance of the young Sachem involuntarily responded to this description of the scene through which he had just passed, and it was impossible for one so tutored, to prevent the blood from rushing faster to a heart, that ever beat, strongly, with the wishes of a warrior.

"What sees my father, next?" he asked, triumph insensibly stealing into the tones of his voice.

"A Messenger — and then he hears — the moccasins of squaws!"

"Enough; — Metacom, the women of the Narragansetts have no lodges.

Their villages are in coals, and they follow the young men, for food."

"I see no deer. The hunter will not find venison in a clearing of the Pale-Faces. But the corn is full of milk; Couan-chet is very hungry, he hath sent for his woman, that he may eat!"

The fingers of that hand, which grasped the handle of the tomahawk, appeared to bury themselves in the wood; the glittering axe itself was slightly raised; but the fierce gleaming of resentment subsided, as the anger of the young Sachem vanished, and a dignified calm again settled on his countenance.

"Go, Wampanoag," he said, waving a hand proudly, as if determined to be no longer harassed by the language of his wily associate. "My young men will raise the whoop, when they hear my voice; and they will kill deer for their women. Sachem, my mind is my own."

Philip answered to the look which accompanied these words, with one that

threatened vengeance ; but smothering his anger , with his accustomed wisdom ; he left the hill , assuming an air that affected more of commiseration than of resentment.

“ Why has Conanchet sent for a woman from the woods ? ” repeated the same soft voice , nearer to the elbow of the young Sachem , and which spoke with less of the timidity of the sex , now that the troubled spirit of the Indians of those regions had disappeared.

“ Narra-mattah , come near ; ” returned the young chief , changing the deep and proud tones in which he had addressed his restless and bold companion in arms , to those which better suited the gentle ear for which his words were intended . ” Fear not , daughter of the morning , for those around us , are of a race used to see women at the council fires . Now look , with an open eye ; is there any thing among these trees that seemeth like an ancient tradition ? Hast ever beheld such

a valley, in thy dreams? Have yonder Pale-Faces, whom the tomahawks of my young men spared, been led before thee by the Great Spirit, in the dark night?"

The female listened, in deep attention. Her gaze was wild and uncertain, and yet it was not absolutely without gleamings of a half-reviving intelligence. Until that moment, she had been too much occupied in conjecturing the subject of her visit, to regard the natural objects by which she was surrounded: but with her attention thus directly turned upon them, her organs of sight embraced each and all with the discrimination that is so remarkable in those, whose faculties are quickened by danger and necessity. Passing from side to side, her swift glances run over the distant hamlet, with its little fort; the buildings in the near grounds; the soft and verdant fields; the fragrant orchard, beneath whose leafy shades she stood, and the blackened tow-

er, that rose in its centre, like some gloomy memorial, placed there to remind the spectator not to trust too fondly to the signs of peace and loveliness that reigned around. Shaking back the ringlets, that had blown about her temples, the wondering female returned thoughtfully and in silence to her place.

"Tis a village of the Yengeese!" she said, after a long and expressive pause. "A Narragansett woman does not love to look at the lodges of the hated race."

"Listen—Lies have never entered the ears of Narra-mattah. My tongue hath spoken like the tongue of a chief. Thou didst not come of the sumach, but of the snow. This hand of thine is not like the hands of the women of my tribe; it is little, for the Great Spirit did not make it for work; it is of the colour of the sky in the morning, for thy fathers were born near the place, where the sun rises. Thy blood is like spring water. All this thou knowest, for none have spoken

false in thy ear. Speak; dost thou never see the wigwam of thy father? Does not his voice whisper to thee, in the language of his people?"

The female stood in the attitude which a Sybil might be supposed to assume, while listening to the occult mandates of the mysterious oracle, every faculty entranced and attentive.

"Why does Conanchet ask these questions of his wife? He knows, what she knows; he sees, what she sees; his mind, is her mind. If the Great Spirit made her skin of a different colour, he made her heart the same. Narra-mattah will not listen to the lying language; she shuts her ears, for there is deceit in its sounds. She tries to forget it. One tongue can say all she wishes to speak to Conanchet; why should she look back in dreams, when a great chief is her husband?"

The eye of the warrior, as he looked upon the ingenuous and confiding face of

the speaker was kind to fondness. The firmness had passed away, and in its place was left the winning softness of affection, which, as it belongs to nature, is seen, at times, in the expression of an Indian's eye, as strongly as it is ever known to sweeten the intercourse of a more polished condition of life.

"Girl," he said with emphasis, after a moment of thought, as if he would recal her and himself to more important duties, "this is a war path; all on it are men. Thou wast like the pigeon before its wing opens, when I brought thee from the nest; still the winds of many winters had blown upon thee. Dost never think of the warmth, and of the food of the lodge, in which thou hast past so many seasons?"

"The wigwam of Conanchet is warm; no woman of the tribe hath as many furs as Narra-mattah."

"He is a great hunter! when they hear his moccasin the beavers lie down

to be killed! But the men of the Pale-Faces hold the plough. Does not 'the driven snow' think of those who fenced the wigwam of her father from the cold, or of the manner in which the Yengeese live?"

His youthful and attentive wife seemed to reflect; but raising her face, with an expression of content that could not be counterfeited, she shook her head in the negative.

"Does she never see a fire kindled among the lodges, or hear the whoops of warriors, as they break into a settlement?"

"Many fires have been kindled before her eyes. The ashes of the Narragansett town are not yet cold."

"Does not Narra-mattah hear her father speaking to the God of the Yengeese? Listen, he is asking favour for his child!"

"The Great Spirit of the Narragansett has ears for his people."

"But I hear a softer voice! 'Tis a woman of the Pale-Faces among her children; cannot the daughter hear!"

Narra-mattah or 'the driven snow' laid her hand lightly on the arm of the chief, and she looked wistfully and long into his face, without an answer. The gaze seemed to deprecate the anger that might be awakened by what she was about to reveal.

"Chief of my people," she said, encouraged by his still calm and gentle brow, to proceed, "what a girl of the clearings sees in her dreams, shall not be hid. It is not the lodges of her race, for the wigwam of her husband is warmer. It is not the food and clothes of a cunning people, for who is richer than the wife of a great chief! It is not her fathers speaking to their Spirit, for there is none stronger than Manitou. Narra-mattah has forgotten all; she does not wish to think of things like these. She knows how to hate a hungry and craving

race. But she sees one that the wives of the Narragansetts do not see. She sees a woman, with a white skin; her eye looks softly on her child in her dreams; it is not an eye, it is a tongue! It says, what does the wife of Conanchet wish?—is she cold? here are furs— is she hungry? here is venison— is she tired? the arms of the pale woman open, that an Indian girl may sleep, When there is silence in the lodges, when Conanchet and his young men lie down, then does this pale woman speak. Sachem, she does not talk of the battles of her people, nor of the scalps that her warriors have taken, nor of the manner in which the Pequots and Mohicans fear her tribe. She does not tell how a young Narragansett should obey her husband, nor how the women must keep food in the lodges, for the hunters that are wearied; her tongue useth strange words. It names a Mighty and Just Spirit; it telleth of peace, and not of war; it soundeth as one talking from the clouds;

it is like the falling of the water among rocks. Narra-mattah loves to listen, for the words seem to her like the Wish-Ton-Wish, when he whistles in the woods."

Conanchet had fastened a look of deep and affectionate interest, on the wild and sweet countenance of the being, who stood before him. She had spoken in that attitude of earnest and natural eloquence, that no art can equal, and when she ceased, he laid a hand, in kind but melancholy fondness, on the half inclined and motionless head, as he answered.

"This is the bird of night, singing to its young! The Great Spirit of thy fathers is angry, that thou livest in the lodge of a Narragansett. His sight is too cunning to be cheated. He knows that the moccasins, and the wampum, and the robe of fur are liars; he sees the colour of the skin beneath."

"Conanchet, no;" returned the female hurriedly, and with a decision her timid-

ity did not give reason to expect. "He seeth farther than the skin, and knoweth the colour of the mind. He hath forgotten that one of his girls is missing."

"It is not so. The eagle of my people was taken into the lodges of the Pale-Faces. He was young, and they taught him to sing with another-tongue. The colours of his feathers were changed, and they thought to cheat the Maniton. But when the door was open he spread his wings and flew back to his nest. It is not so. What hath been done is good, and what will be done is better. Come; there is a straight path before us."

Thus saying, Conanchet motioned to his wife to follow towards the groupe of captives. The foregoing dialogue had occurred in a place where the two parties were partially concealed from each other, by the ruin; but as the distance was so trifling, the Sachem and his companion were soon confronted with those he sought. Leaving his wife a little without the cir-

cle, Conanchet advanced, and taking the unresisting and half unconscious Ruth by the arm, he led her forward. He placed the two females in attitudes where each might look the other full in the face. Strong emotion struggled in a countenance which, in spite of its fierce mask of war-paint, could not entirely conceal its workings.

"See," he said, in English, looking earnestly from one to the other. "The good Spirit is not ashamed of his work. What he hath done, he hath done; Nar-ragansett nor Yengeese can alter it. This is the white bird that came from the sea," he added, touching the shoulder of Ruth, lightly with a finger, "and this the young, that she warmed under her wing."

Then folding his arms on his naked breast he appeared to summon his energy, lest, in the scene that he knew must follow, his manhood might be betrayed, into some act unworthy of his name.

The captives were necessarily ignorant of the meaning of the scene which they had just witnessed. So many strange and savage-looking forms were constantly passing and repassing before their eyes, that the arrival of one, more or less, was not likely to be noted. Until she heard Conanchet speak, in her native tongue, Ruth had lent no attention to the interview between him and his wife. But the figurative language, and no less remarkable action of the Narragansett, had the effect to arouse her suddenly, and in the most exciting manner, from her melancholy.

No child of tender age ever unexpectedly came before the eyes of Ruth Heathcote, without painfully recalling the image of the cherub she had lost. The playful voice of infancy never surprised her ear, without the sound conveying a pang to the heart, nor could allusion, ever so remote, be made to persons, or events, that bore resemblance to the sad incidents

of her own life, without quickening the never dying pulses of maternal love. No wonder then that when she found herself in the situation and under the circumstances described, that nature grew strong within her, and that her mind caught glimpses, however dim and indistinct they might be, of a truth that the reader has already anticipated. Still a certain and intelligible clue was wanting. Fancy had ever painted her child in the innocence and infancy in which it had been torn from her arms, and here, while there was so much to correspond with reasonable expectation, there was little to answer to the long and fondly cherished picture. The delusion, if so holy and natural a feeling may thus be termed, had been too deeply seated to be dispossessed at a glance. Gazing long, earnestly and with features that varied with every changing feeling, she held the stranger at the length of her two arms, alike unwilling to release her hold,

or to admit her closer to a heart, which might rightfully be the property of another.

“Who art thou!” demanded the mother, in a voice that was tremulous with the emotions of that sacred character. “Speak, mysterious and lovely being; who art thou!”

Narra-mattah had turned a terrified and imploring look at the immovable and calm form of the chief, as if she sought protection from him, at whose hands she had been accustomed to receive it. But a different sensation took possession of her mind, when she heard sounds which had too often soothed the ear of infancy, ever to be forgotten. Struggling ceased, and her pliant form assumed the attitude of intense and entranced attention. Her head was bent aside, as if the ear were eager to drink in a repetition of the tones, while her bewildered and delighted eye, still sought the countenance of her husband.

“Vision of the woods!—wilt thou not answer?” continued Ruth. “If there is reverence for the Holy One of Israel, in thine heart, answer, that I may know thee!”

“Hist! Conanchet;” murmured the wife, over whose features the glow of pleased and wild surprise, continued to deepen. “Come nearer, Sachem; the Spirit that talketh to Narra-mattah in her dreams, is nigh.”

“Woman of the Yengeese!” said the husband, advancing with dignity to the spot, “let the clouds blow from thy sight. Wife of a Narragansett! see clearly. The Manitou of your race speaks strong. He telleth a mother to know her child!”

Ruth could hesitate no longer; neither sound nor exclamation escaped her, but as she strained the yielding frame of her recovered daughter to her heart, it appeared as if she strove to incorporate the two bodies into one. A cry of pleasure and astonishment drew all around her.

Then came the evidence of the power of nature when strongly awakened. Age and youth alike acknowledged its potency, and recent alarms were overlooked, in the pure joy of such a moment. The spirit of even the lofty minded Conanchet was shaken. Raising the hand, at whose wrist still hung the bloody tomahawk, he veiled his face, and turning aside, that none might see the weakness of so great a warrior, he wept.

CHAPTER V.

"One sees more devils than vast hell can hold;
That is, the madman:—

Midsummer-Night's Dream

On quitting the hill, Philip had summoned his Wompanoags, and supported by the obedient and fierce Annawon, a savage that might, under better auspices, have proved a worthy Lieutenant to Cæsar, he left the fields of Wish-Ton-Wish. Accustomed to see these sudden outbursts of temper in their leaders, the followers of Conanchet, who would have preserved their air of composure under far more trying circumstances,

saw him depart, equally without question and without alarm. But when their own Sachem appeared on the ground which was still red with the blood of the combatants, and made known his intention to abandon a conquest that seemed more than half achieved, he was not heard without murmuring. The authority of an Indian Chief is far from despotic, and though there is reason to think it is often aided, if not generated, by the accidental causes of birth and descent, it receives its main support, in the personal qualities of him who rules. Happily for the Narragansett leader, even his renowned father, the hapless Miantonimoh, had not purchased a higher name for wisdom, or for daring, than that which had been fairly won by his still youthful son. The savage humours, and the rankling desire for vengeance in the boldest of his subalterns, were made to quail before the menacing glances of an eye that seldom threatened, without performance; nor

was there one of them all, when challenged to come forth to brave the anger; or to oppose the eloquence of his chief; who did not shrink from a contest, which habitual respect had taught them to believe would be far too unequal for success. Within less than an hour after Ruth had clasped her child to her bosom, the invaders had altogether disappeared. The dead of their party were withdrawn and concealed, with all the usual care, in order that no scalp of a warrior might be left in the hands of his enemies.

It was not unusual for the Indians to retire satisfied with the results of their first blow. So much of their military success was dependent on surprise, that it oftener happened the retreat commenced with its failure, than that victory was obtained by perseverance.

So long as the battle raged, their courage was equal to all its dangers; but among people who made so great a merit of artifice, it is not at all surprising that

they seldom put more to the hazard than was justified by the most severe discretion. When it was known, therefore, that the foe had disappeared in the forest, the inhabitants of the village were more ready to believe the movement was the result of their own manful resistance, than to seek motives that might not prove so soothing to their self-esteem. The retreat was thought to be quite in rule, and though prudence forbade pursuit, able and well-limbed scouts were sent on their trail, as well to prevent a renewal of the surprise, as to enable the forces of the colony to know the tribe of their enemies, and the direction which they had taken.

Then came a scene of solemn ceremonies and of deep affliction. Though the parties led by Dudley and the Lieutenant had been so fortunate as to escape with a few immaterial wounds, the soldiers headed by Content, with the exception of those already named, had fallen

to a man. Death had struck, at a blow, twenty of the most efficient individuals, out of that isolated and simple community. Under circumstances in which victory was so barren and so dearly bought, sorrow was a feeling far stronger than rejoicing. Exultation took the aspect of humility, and while men were conscious of their well deserving, they were the most sensible of their dependance on a power they could neither influence nor comprehend. The characteristic opinions of the religionists became still more exalted, and the close of the day was quite as remarkable, for an exhibition of the peculiarly exaggerated impressions of the Colonists, as its opening had been frightful in violence and blood.

. When one of the more active of the runners returned, with the news that the Indians had retired through the forest with a broad trail, a sure sign that they meditated no further concealment near

the valley, and that they had already been traced many miles on their retreat, the villagers returned to their usual habitations. The dead were then distributed, among those who claimed the nearest right to the performance of the last duties of affection, and it might have been truly said, that mourning had taken up its abode in nearly every dwelling. The ties of blood were so general in a society thus limited, and, where they failed, the charities of life were so intimate and so natural, that not an individual of them all escaped, without feeling that the events of the day had robbed him, forever, of some one on whom he was partially dependant for comfort, or happiness.

As the day drew towards its close, the little bell again summoned the congregation to the church. On this solemn occasion but few of those who still lived to hear its sounds were absent. The moment when Meek arose for prayer was

one of general and intense feeling. The places so lately occupied by those who had fallen were now empty, and they resembled so many eloquent blanks in the description of what had passed, expressing far more than any language could impart. The appeal of the divine was in his usual strain of sublimated piety, mysterious insights into the hidden purposes of Providence being strangely blended with the more intelligible wants and passions of man. While he gave Heaven the glory of the victory, he spoke with a lofty and pretending humility of the instruments of its power, and although seemingly willing to acknowledge that his people abundantly deserved the heavy blow which had alighted on them, there was an evident impatience of the agents by which it had been inflicted. The principles of the sectarian were so singularly qualified by the feelings of the borderer, that one, subtle in argument, would have found little diffi-

culty in detecting flaws in the reasoning of this zealot, but as so much was obscured by metaphysical mists, and so much was left for the generalities of doctrine, his hearers, without an exception, made such an application of what he uttered, as apparently rendered every mind satisfied.

The sermon was as extemporaneous as the prayer; if any thing can come extempore, from a mind so drilled and fortified in opinion. It contained much the same matter, delivered a little less in the form of an apostrophe. The stricken congregation, while they were encouraged with the belief that they were vessels set apart for some great and glorious end of Providence, were plainly told that they merited far heavier affliction, than this which had now befallen, and they were reminded that it was their duty to desire even condemnation, that he who framed the heavens and the earth might be glorified! Then they heard

comfortable conclusions, which might reasonably teach them to expect, that though in the abstract such were the obligations of the real christian, there was good reason to think that all who listened to doctrines so pure would be remembered with an especial favor.

So useful a servant of the temple as Meek Wolfe did not forget the practical application of his subject. It is true, that no visible emblem of the cross was shown to excite his hearers, nor were they stimulated to loosen blood-hounds on the trail of their enemies, but the former was kept sufficiently before the mind's eye by constant allusions to its merits, and the Indians were pointed at as the instruments, by which the great father of evil hoped, to prevent 'the wilderness from blossoming like the rose', and 'yielding the sweet savours of godliness'. Philip and Conanchet were openly denounced, by name; some dark insinuations being made that the person of the

former was no more than the favourite tenement of Moloch, while the hearer was left to devise a suitable spirit for the government of the physical powers of the other, from among any of the more evil agencies that were named in the Bible. Any doubts of the lawfulness of the contest, that might assail tender consciences, were brushed away, by a bold and decided hand. There was no attempt at justification, however, for all difficulties of this nature were resolved by the imperative obligations of duty. A few ingenious allusions, to the manner in which the Israelites dispossessed the occupants of Judea, were of great service in this particular part of the subject, since it was not difficult to convince men, who so strongly felt the impulses of religious excitement, that they were stimulated rightfully. Fortified by this advantage Mr. Wolfe manifested no desire to avoid the main question. He affirmed that if the empire of the true faith could

be established by no other means, a circumstance which he assumed it was sufficiently apparent to all understandings could not be done, he pronounced it the duty of young and old, the weak and the strong, to unite in assisting to visit the former possessors of the country, with what he termed the wrath of an offended Deity. He spoke of the fearful slaughter of the preceeding winter, in which neither years nor sex had been spared, as a triumph of the righteous cause, and as an encouragement to persevere. Then by a transition, that was not extraordinary in an age so remarkable for religious subtleties, Meek returned to the more mild and obvious truths which pervade the doctrines of him whose church he professed to uphold. His hearers were admonished to observe lives of humility and charity, and were piously dismissed, with his benediction, to their several homes.

The congregation quitted the building

with the feelings of men who thought themselves favoured by peculiar and extraordinary intelligences with the author of all truth, while the army of Mahomet itself was scarcely less influenced by fanataticism, than these blinded zealots. There was something so grateful to human frailty, in reconciling their resentments and their temporal interests to their religious duties, that it should excite little wonder, when we add that most of them were fully prepared to become ministers of vengeance, in the hands of any bold leader. While the inhabitants of the settlement were thus struggling between passions so contradictory, the shades of evening gradually fell upon their village, and then came darkness, with the rapid strides with which it follows the setting of the sun, in a low latitude.

Some time before the shadows of the trees were getting the grotesque and exaggerated forms, which precede the

last rays of the luminary, and while the people were still listening to their pastor, a solitary individual was placed on a giddy eyrie, whence he might note the movements of those who dwelt in the hamlet, without being the subject of observation himself. A short spur of the mountain projected into the valley, on the side nearest to the dwelling of the Heathcotes. A little tumbling brook, which the melting of the snows, and the occasionally heavy rains of the climate periodically increased into a torrent, had worn a deep ravine in its rocky bosom. Time and the constant action of water, aided by the driving storms of winter and autumn, had converted many of the different faces of this ravine into wild-looking pictures of the residences of men. There was however one spot in particular, around which a closer inspection than that which the distance of the houses in the settlement offered, might have detected far more plausible

signs of the agency of human hands, than any that were afforded by the fancied resemblances of fantastic angles and accidental formations.

Precisely at that point, where a sweep of the mountain permitted the best view of the valley, did the rocks assume the wildest, the most confused, and consequently the most favourable appearance for the construction of any residence, which it was desirable should escape the curious eyes of the settlers, at the same time that it possessed the advantage of overlooking their proceedings. A hermit would have chosen the place as a spot suited to distant and calm observation of the world, while it was every way adapted to solitary reflection and ascetic devotion. All who have journeyed through the narrow and water-worn vineyards and meadows which are washed by the Rhone, ere that river pours its tribute into the Lake of Lemman, have seen some such site, occupied by one who has de-

voted his life to seclusion and the altar, overhanging the village of St. Maurice, in the Canton of le Valais. But there is an air of obtrusiveness in the Swiss hermitage that did not belong to the place of which we write, since the one is perched upon its high and narrow ledge, as if to show the world in what dangerous and circumscribed limits God may be worshipped, while the other sought exemption from absolute solitude, while it courted secrecy with the most jealous caution. A small hut had been erected against the side of the rock, in a manner that presented an oblique angle. Care had been taken to surround it with such natural objects, as left little reason to apprehend that its real character could be known by any who did not absolutely mount to the difficult shelf on which it stood. Light entered into this primitive and humble abode by a window that looked into the ravine, and a low door opened on the side next the valley. The

construction was partly of stone and partly of logs, with a roof of bark, and a chimney of mud and sticks.

One, who by his severe and gloomy brow, was a fit possessor of so secluded a tenement, was at the hour named, seated on a stone at the most salient angle of the mountain, and at the place where the eye commanded the widest and least obstructed view of the abodes of man, in the distance. Stones had been rolled together, in a manner to form a little breast-work in his front, so that had there been any wandering gaze sweeping over the face of the mountain, it was far from probable that it would have detected the presence of a man whose whole form, with the exception of the superior parts, was so effectually concealed.

It would have been difficult to say whether this secluded being had thus placed himself, in order to indulge in some habitual and fancied communica-

tion with the little world of the valley, or whether he sat at his post in watchfulness. There was an appearance of each of these occupations in his air; for at times his eye was melancholy and softened, as if his spirit found pleasure in the charities natural to the species, and at others, the brows contracted with sternness, while the lips became more than usually compressed, like those of a man who threw himself on his own innate resolution for support.

The solitude of the place, the air of universal quiet which reigned above, the boundless, leafy carpet, over which the eye looked from that elevated point, and the breathing stillness of the bosom of the woods, united to give grandeur to the scene. The figure of the tenant of the ravine was as immovable as any other object of the view. It seemed, in all but colour and expression, of stone. An elbow was leaning on the little screen in front, and the head was supported by a hand. At

the distance of an arrow's flight, the eye might readily have supposed it no more than another of the accidental imitations, which had been worn in the rock by the changes of centuries. An hour passed, and scarce a limb had been changed, or a muscle relieved. Either contemplation, or the patient awaiting of some looked for event appeared to suspend the ordinary functions of life. At length an interruption occurred to this extraordinary inaction. A rustling, not louder than that which would have been made by the leap of a squirrel, was first heard in the bushes above; it was succeeded by a crackling of branches, and then a fragment of a rock came bounding down the precipice, until it shot over the head of the still motionless hermit, and fell, with a noise that drew a succession of echoes from the caverns of the place, into the ravine beneath.

Notwithstanding the suddenness of this interruption, and the extraordinary

fracas with which it was accompanied, he, who might be supposed to be most affected by it, manifested none of the usual symptoms of fear or surprise. He listened intently, until the last sound had died away, but it was with expectation rather than with alarm. Arising slowly, he looked warily about him, and then walking with a quick step along the ledge, which led to his hut, he disappeared through its door. In another minute, however, he was again seen at his former post; a short carabine, such as was then used by mounted warriors, lying across his knee. If doubt or perplexity beset the mind of this individual, at so palpable a sign that the solitude he courted was in danger of being interrupted, it was not of a nature sufficiently strong to disturb the equanimity of his aspect. A second time the branches rustled and the sounds proceeded from a lower part of the precipice, as if the foot that caused the disturbance was in the act of descending. Though no

one was visible, the nature of the noise could no longer be mistaken. It was evidently the tread of a human foot, for no beast of a weight sufficient to produce so great an impression, would have chosen to rove across a spot, where the support of hands was nearly as necessary as that of the other limbs.

"Come forward!" said he, who in all but the accessories of dress and hostile preparation might so well be termed a hermit — "I am already, here."

The words were not given to the air, for one suddenly appeared on the ledge at the side next the settlement, and within twenty feet of the speaker. When glance met glance, the surprise which evidently took possession of the intruder and of him who appeared to claim a better right to be where they met, seemed mutual. The carabine of the latter, and a musket carried by the former fell into the dangerous line of aim, at the same instant, and in a moment they were thrown upwards.

again, as if a common impulse controlled them. The resident signed to the other to draw nigher, and then every appearance of hostility disappeared, in that sort of familiarity which confidence begets.

"How is it," said the former, to his guest, when both were calmly seated behind the little screen of stones, "that thou hast fallen upon this secret place? The foot of stranger hath not often trod these rocks, and no man before thee hath ever descended the precipice."

"A moccasin is sure," returned the other with Indian brevity. "My father hath a good eye. He can see very far from the door of his lodge."

"Thou knowest that the men of my colour speak often to their Good Spirit, and they do not love to ask his favour in the highways. This place is sacred to his Holy name."

The intruder was the young Sachem of the Narragansetts, and he, who, not-

withstanding this plausible apology, so palpably sought secrecy rather than solitude, was the man that has often been introduced into these pages under the shade of mystery. The instant recognition and the mutual confidence require no further explanation, since enough has already been developed in the course of the narrative, to show that they were no strangers to each other. Still the meeting had not taken place without uneasiness on the one part, and great, though admirably veiled surprise, on the other. As became his high station and lofty character, the bearing of Conanchet betrayed none of the littleness of a vulgar curiosity. He met his ancient acquaintance with the calm dignity of his rank, and it would have been difficult for the most inquiring eye to have detected a wandering glance, a single prying look, or any other sign that he deemed the place at all extraordinary, for such an interview. He listened to the little explanation

of the other, with grave courtesy, and suffered a short time to elapse before he made any reply.

"The Manitou of the pale men," he then said, "should be pleased with my father. His words are often in the ears of his Great Spirit! The trees and the rocks know them."

"Like all of a sinful and fallen race," returned the stranger with the severe air of the age, "I have much need of my askings. But why dost thou think that my voice is so often heard in this secret place?"

The finger of Conanchet pointed to the worn rock at his feet, and his eye glanced furtively at the beaten path which led between the spot and the door of the lodge.

"A Yengeese hath a hard heel, but it is softer than stone. The hoof of the deer would pass many times to leave such a trail."

"Thou art quick of eye, Narragansett,

and yet thy judgment may be deceived. My tongue is not the only one that speaketh to the God of my people."

The Sachem bent his head slightly, in acquiescence, as if unwilling to press the subject. But his companion was not so easily satisfied, for he felt the consciousness of a fruitless attempt at deception goading him to some plausible means of quieting the suspicions of the Indian.

"That I am now alone may be matter of pleasure, or of accident," he added; "thou knowest that this hath been a busy and a bloody day among the pale men, and there are dead and dying in their lodges. One who hath no wigwam of his own, may have found time to worship by himself."

"The mind is very cunning," returned Conanchet; "it can hear when the ear is deaf; it can see when the eye is shut. My father hath spoken to the Good Spirit with the rest of his tribe."

As the chief concluded, he pointed

significantly towards the distant church, out of which the excited congregation, we have described, was at that moment pouring into the green and little trodden street of the hamlet. The other appeared to understand his meaning and, at the same instant, to feel the folly, as well as the uselessness, of attempting any longer to mislead one, that already knew so much of his former mode of life.

“Indian, thou sayest true,” he rejoined gloomily: “the mind seeth far, and it seeth often in the bitterness of sorrow. My spirit was communing with the spirits of those thou seest, when thy step was first heard; besides thine own, the feet of man never mounted to this place, except it be of those who minister to my bodily wants. Thou sayest true; the mental sight is keen; and far beyond those distant hills, on which the last rays of the setting sun are now shining so gloriously, doth mine often bear me in

spirit. Thou wast once my fellow lodger, youth, and much pleasure had I in striving to open thy young mind to the truths of our race, and to teach thee to speak with the tongue of a Christian; but years have passed away—hark! There cometh one, up the path. Hast thou dread of a Yengeese?"

The calm mien, with which Conanchet had been listening, changed to a cold smile. His hand had felt for the lock of the musket, some time before his companion had betrayed any consciousness of the approaching footstep; but until questioned, no change of countenance was visible.

"Is my father afraid for his friend?" he asked, pointing in the direction of him who approached. "Is it an armed warrior?"

"No; he cometh with the means of sustaining a burthen that must be borne, until it pleaseth him, who knoweth what is good for all his creatures, to ease me

of it. It may be the parent of her thou hast this day restored to her friends, or it may be the brother; for, at times, I owe this kindness to different members of that worthy family."

A look of intelligence shot across the swarthy features of the chief. His decision appeared taken. Arising, he left his weapon at the feet of his companion, and moved swiftly along the ledge, as if to meet the intruder. In another instant he returned, bearing a little bundle closely enveloped in belts of richly beaded wampum. Placing the latter gently by the side of the old man, for time had changed the colour of the solitary's hair to grey, he said in a low, quick, voice, pointing with significance at what he had done,———

"The Messenger will not go back with an empty hand. My father is wise; he will say what is good."

There was little time for further explanation. The door of the hut had scarcely

closed on Conanchet, before young Mark Heathcote appeared at the point where the path bent around the angle of the precipice.

"Thou knowest what hast passed and wilt suffer me to depart with brief discourse," said the young man, placing food at the feet of him he came to seek; "ha! what hast here?—didst gain this, in the fray of the morning?"

"It is booty that I freely bestow; take it to the house of thy father. It is left with that object. Now tell me of the manner in which death hath dealt with our people, for thou knowest that necessity drove me, from among them, so soon as liberty was granted."

Mark showed no disposition to gratify the other's wish. He gazed on the bundle of Conanchet, as if his eye had never before looked on a similar object, and keenly contending passions were playing about a brow, that was seldom as tranquil, as suited the self-denying habits of the times and country.

“It shall be done, Narragansett!” he said, speaking between his clenched teeth; “it shall be done!” then turning on his heel he stalk’d along the giddy path, with a rapidity of stride, that kept the other in fearful suspense for his safety, until his active form had disappeared.

The recluse arose, and sought the occupant of his humble abode.

“Come forth,” he said, opening the narrow door for the passage of the Chief. “The youth hath departed with thy burthen, and thou art now alone with an ancient associate.”

Conanchet re-appeared at the summons, but it was with an eye less glowing and a brow less stern, than when he entered the little cabin. As he moved slowly to the stone he had before occupied, his step was arrested for a moment, and a look of melancholy regret seemed to be cast at the spot, where he had laid the bundle. Conquering his feelings,

however, in the habitual self-command of his people, he resumed his seat, with the air of one that was grave by nature, while he appeared to exert no effort in order to preserve the admirable equanimity of his features. A long and thoughtful silence succeeded, and then the solitary spoke.

"We have made a friend of the Nargansett Chief," he said, "and this league with Philip is broken?"

"Yengeese," returned the other, "I am full of the blood of Sachems."

"Why should the Indian and the white do each other this violence! The earth is large, and there is place for men of all colours and of all nations, on its surface."

"My father hath found but little," said the other, bestowing such a cautious glance at the narrow limits of his host, as at once betrayed the sarcastic purport of his words, while it equally bespoke the courtesy of his mind.

“A light minded and vain prince is seated on the throne of a once godly nation, Chief, and darkness has again come over a land, which, of late, shone with a clear and shining light! The just are made to flee from the habitations of their infancy, and the temples of the elect are abandoned to the abominations of idolatry. Oh England! England! when will thy cup of bitterness be full—when shall this judgment pass from thee—my spirit groaneth over thy fall—yea, my inmost soul is saddened, with the spectacle of thy misery!”

Conanchet was too delicate to regard the glazed eye and flush'd forehead of the speaker, but he listened in amazement and in ignorance. Such expressions had often met his ear before, and though his tender years had probably prevented their producing much effect, now, that he again heard them in his manhood, they conveyed no intelligible meaning to his mind. Suddenly laying a finger on

the knee of his companion, he said;—

“The arm of my father was raised, on the side of the Yengeese, to day; yet they give him no seat at their Council Fire!”

“The sinful man, who ruleth in the island whence my people came, hath an arm that is long as his mind is vain. Though debarred from the councils of this valley, chief, time hath been, when my voice was heard in councils that struck heavily at the power of his race. These eyes have seen justice done on him, who gave existence to the double-tongued instrument of Belial, that now governeth a rich and glorious realm!”

“My father hath taken the scalp of a great chief!”

“It helped to take his head!” returned the solitary, a ray of bitter exultation gleaming through the habitual austerity of his brow.

“Come. The eagle flies above the clouds, that he may move his wings

freely. The panther leaps longest on the widest plain; the biggest fish swim in the deep water. My father cannot stretch himself between these rocks. He is too big to lie down in a little wigwam. The woods are wide; let him change the colour of his skin and be a gray head at the Council-Fire of my nation. The warriors will listen to what he says, for his hand hath done a strong deed!"

"It may not be—it may not be, Narragansett. That which hath been generated in the spirit, must abide, and it would be 'easier for the blackamoor to become white, or for the leopard to change his spots,' than for one who hath felt the power of the Lord, to cast aside his gifts. But I meet thy proffers of amity, in a charitable and forgiving spirit. My mind is ever with my people; yet is there place for other friendships. Break then this league with the evil-minded and turbulent Philip, and let the hatchet be forever buried, in the path between thy

village and the towns of the Yengeese.

"Where is my village! There is a dark place near the islands, on the shores of the Great Lake, but I see no lodges."

"We will rebuild thy towns, and people them anew. Let there be peace between us."

"My mind is ever with my people;" returned the Indian, repeating the other's words, with an emphasis that could not be mistaken.

A long and melancholy pause succeeded; and when the conversation was renewed, it had reference to those events which had taken place in the fortunes of each, since the time when they were both tenants of the block house, that stood amid the ancient habitations of the Heathcotes. Each appeared too well to comprehend the character of the other, to attempt any further efforts towards producing a change of purpose, and darkness had gathered about the place, before they arose to enter the hut of the solitary.

CHAPTER VI

"Sleep, thou hast been a grandsire, and begot
A father to me; and thou hast created
A mother and two brothers.—"

Cymbeline

The short twilight was already passed, when old Mark Heathcote ended the evening prayer. The mixed character of the remarkable events of that day had given birth to a feeling, which could find no other relief than that which flowed from the usual, zealous, confiding and exalted out-pouring of the spirit. On the present occasion, he had even resorted to an extraordinary, and, what one less devout might be tempted to think, a su-

pererogatory offering of thanksgiving and praise. After dismissing the dependants of the establishment, supported by the arm of his son, he had withdrawn into an inner apartment, and there, surrounded only by those who had the nearest claims on his affections, the old man again raised his voice to laud the being, who, in the midst of so much general grief, had deigned to look upon his particular race, with the eyes of remembrance and of favour. He spoke of his recovered grand-child by name, and he dealt with the whole subject of her captivity among the heathen, and her restoration to the foot of the altar, with the fervour of one who saw the wise decrees of Providence in the event, and with a tenderness of sentiment that age was far from having extinguished. It was at the close of this private and peculiar worship, that we return into the presence of the family.

The spirit of reform had driven those,

who so violently felt its influence, into many usages that, to say the least, were quite as ungracious to the imagination, as the customs they termed idolatrous were obnoxious to the attacks of their own unaccommodating theories. The first Protestants had expelled so much from the service of the altar, that little was left for the Puritan to destroy, without incurring the risk of leaving it naked of its loveliness. By a strange substitution of subtlety for humility, it was thought Pharasaical to bend the knee in public, lest the great essential of spiritual worship might be supplanted by the more attainable merit of formula; and while rigid aspects, and prescribed deportments of a new character, were observed with all the zeal of converts, ancient and even natural practices were condemned, chiefly, we believe, from that necessity of innovation which appears to be an unavoidable attendant of all plans of improvement, whether they are successful, or

the reverse. But though the Puritans refused to bow their stubborn limbs, when the eye of man was on them, even while asking boons suited to their own sublimated opinions, it was permitted to assume in private, an attitude which was thought to admit of so gross an abuse, inasmuch as it infers a claim to a religious vitality, while in truth the soul might only be slumbering in the security of mere moral pretension.

On the present occasion, they who worshipped, in secret, had bent their bodies to the humblest posture of devotion. When Ruth Heathcote arose from her knees, it was with a hand clasped in that of the child whom, her recent devotion was well suited to make her think had been rescued from a condition far more gloomy than that of the grave. She had used a gentle violence to force the wondering being, at her side, to join, so far as externals could go, in the prayer; and now it was ended, she sought the

countenance of her daughter, in order to read the impression the scene had produced, with all the solicitude of a christian, heightened by the tenderest maternal love.

Narra-mattah, as we shall continue to call her, in air, expression and attitude, resembled one who had a fancied existence, in the delusion of some exciting dream. Her ear remembered sounds which had so often been repeated in her infancy, and her memory recalled indistinct recollections of most of the objects and usages that were so suddenly replaced before her eyes; but the former now conveyed their meaning to a mind that had gained its strength, under a very different system of theology, and the latter came too late to supplant usages that were rooted in her affections, by the aid of all those wild and seductive habits, that are known to become nearly unconquerable in those who have long been subject to their influence. She stood, there-

fore, in the centre of the grave, self-restrained groupe of her nearest kin, like an alien to their blood, resembling some timid and but half-tamed tenant of the air, that human art had endeavoured to domesticate, by placing it in the society of the more tranquil and confiding inhabitants of the aviary.

Notwithstanding the strength of her affections, and her devotion to all the natural duties of her station, Ruth Heathcote was not now to learn the manner in which she was to subdue any violence in their exhibition. The first indulgence of joy and gratitude was over, and in its place appeared the never tiring, vigilant, engrossing, but regulated watchfulness, which the events would naturally create. The doubts, misgivings, and even fearful apprehensions that beset her, were smothered in an appearance of satisfaction; and something like gleamings of happiness were again seen playing about a brow, that had so long been clouded

with an unobtrusive, but corroding care.

"And thou recallest thine infancy, my Ruth?" asked the mother, when the respectful period of silence, which ever succeeded prayer in that family, was passed; "thy thoughts have not been altogether strangers to us, but nature hath had its place in thy heart. Tell us, child, of thy wanderings in the forest, and of the sufferings that one so tender must have undergone, among a barbarous people. There is pleasure in listening to all thou hast seen and felt, now that we know there is an end to unhappiness."

She spoke to an ear that was deaf to language like this. Narra-Mattah evidently understood her words, while their meaning was wrapped in an obscurity, that she neither wished to, nor was capable of comprehending. Keeping a gaze, in which pleasure and wonder were powerfully blended, on that soft look of affection which beamed from her mother's eye, she felt hurriedly among

the folds of her dress, and drawing a belt that was gaily ornamented, after the most ingenious fashion of her adopted people, she approached her half pleased, half distressed parent, and, with hands that trembled equally with timidity and pleasure, she arranged it around her person, in a manner to show its richness to the best advantage. Pleased with her performance the artless being eagerly sought approbation in eyes that bespoke little else than regret. Alarmed at an expression she could not translate, the gaze of Narramattah wandered, as if it sought support against some sensation to which she was a stranger. Whittal Ring had stolen into the room, and missing the customary features of her own cherished home, the looks of the startled creature rested on the countenance of the witless wanderer. She pointed eagerly at the work of her hands, appealing by an eloquent and artless gesture to the taste of one who should know whether she had done well.

“ Bravely ! ” returned Whittal, approaching nearer to the subject of his admiration— “ ’t is a brave belt, and none but the wife of a Sachem could make so rare a gift ! ”

The girl folded her arms meekly on her bosom, and again appeared satisfied with herself; and with the world.

“ Here is the hand of him visible who dealeth in all wickedness, ” said the Puritan. “ To corrupt the heart with vanities, and to mislead the affections, by luring them to the things of life, is the guile in which he delighteth. A fallen nature lendeth but too ready aid. We must deal with the child, in fervour and watchfulness, or better that her bones were lying by the side of those little ones of thy flock, who are already inheritors of the promise. ”

Respect kept Ruth silent, but while she sorrowed over the ignorance of her child natural affection was strong at her heart. With the tact of a woman and the ten-

derness of a mother, she both saw and felt that severity was not the means to effect the improvement they desired. Taking a seat herself, she drew her child to her person, and first imploring silence by a glance at those around her, she proceeded in a manner that was dictated by the mysterious influence of nature, to fathom the depth of her daughter's mind.

"Come nearer, Narra-Mattah;" she said using the name to which the other would alone answer. "Thou art still in thy youth, my child, but it hath pleased him whose will is law, to have made thee the witness of many changes in this varying life. Tell me if thou recallest the days of infancy, and if thy thoughts ever returned to thy father's house, during those weary years thou wast kept from our view?"

Ruth used gentle force to draw her daughter nearer, while speaking, and the latter sunk into that posture, from which she had just arisen, kneeling as

she had often done in infancy, at her mother's side. The attitude was too full of tender recollections not to be grateful, and the half alarmed being of the forest was suffered to retain it, during most of the dialogue that followed. But while she was thus obedient in person, by the vacancy or rather wonder of an eye that was so eloquent to express all the emotions and knowledge of which she was the mistress, Narra-Mattah plainly manifested that little more than the endearment of her mother's words and manner, was intelligible. Ruth saw the meaning of her hesitation, and smothering the pang it caused, she endeavoured to adapt her language to the habits of one so artless.

“Even the gray heads of thy people were once young,” she resumed; “and they remember the lodges of their fathers. Does my daughter ever think of the time when she played among the children of the Pale-Faces.”

The attentive being at the knee of Ruth listened greedily. Her knowledge of the language of her childhood had been sufficiently implanted, before her captivity, and it had been too often exercised by intercourse with the whites, and more particularly with Whittal Ring, to leave her in any doubt of the meaning of what she now heard. Stealing a timid look over a shoulder, she sought the countenance of Martha, and studying her lineaments for near a minute, with intense regard, she laughed aloud, in the contagious merriment of an Indian girl.

“Thou hast not forgotten us! That glance at her who was the companion of thy infancy assures me, and we shall soon again possess our Ruth, in affection, as we now possess her in the body. I will not speak to thee of that fearful night, when the violence of the savage robbed us of thy presence, nor of the bitter sorrow which beset us at thy loss; but there is one who must still be known to thee,

my child; He who sitteth above the clouds, who holdeth the earth in the hollow of his hand, and who looketh in mercy on all that journey on the path to which his own finger pointeth. Hath he yet a place in thy thoughts? Thou rememberest His Holy Name, and still thinkest of his power?"

The listener bent her head aside, as if to catch the full meaning of what she heard, the shadows of deep reverence passing over a face that had so lately been smiling. After a pause she audibly murmured the word —

"Manitou."

"Manitou, or Jehovah; God, or King of Kings, and Lord of Lords! it mattereth little which term is used to express his power. Thou knowest him then, and hast never ceased to call upon his name?"

"Narra-mattah is a woman. She is afraid to speak to the Manitou aloud. He knows the voices of the chiefs, and opens his ears, when they ask help."

The Puritan groaned, but Ruth succeeded in quelling her own anguish, lest she should disturb the reviving confidence of her daughter.

“This may be the Manitou of an Indian,” she said, “but it is not the Christian’s God. Thou art of a race which worships differently, and it is proper that thou shouldst call on the name of the Deity of thy father’s. Even the Naraganset teacheth this truth! Thy skin is white, and thy ears should hearken to the traditions of the men of thy blood.”

The head of the daughter drooped at this allusion to her colour, as if she would fain conceal the mortifying truth from every eye, but she had not time for answer, ere Whittal Ring drew near, and pointing to the burning colour of her cheeks, that were deepened as much with shame as with the heats of an American sun, he said —

“The wife of the Sachem hath begun

to change. She will soon be like Nipset, all red—See,” he added, laying a finger on a part of his own arm where the sun and the winds had not yet destroyed the original colour; “the Evil Spirit poured water into his blood too, but it will come out, again. As soon as he is so dark that the Evil Spirit will not know him, he will go on the war path; and then the lying Pale Faces may dig up the bones of their fathers, and move towards the sun-rise, or his lodge will be lined with hair of the colour of a deer!”

“And thou, my daughter; canst thou hear this threat against the people of thy nation—of thy blood—of thy God—without a shudder?”

The eye of Narra-Mattah seemed in doubt; still it regarded Whittal with its accustomed look of kindness. The innocent, full of his imaginary glory, raised his hand in exultation, and by gestures that could not easily be misunderstood, he indicated the manner in which he in-

tended to rob his victims of the usual trophy. While the youth was enacting the disgusting, but expressive pantomime, Ruth watched the countenance of her child, in nearly breathless agony. She would have been relieved by a single glance of disapprobation, by a solitary movement of a rebellious muscle, or by the smallest sign that the tender nature of one so lovely, and otherwise so gentle, revolted at so unequivocal evidence of the barbarous practices of her adopted people. But no Empress of Rome could have witnessed the dying agonies of the hapless gladiator, no consort of a more modern prince could read the bloody list of the victims of her husband's triumph, nor any betrothed fair listen to the murderous deeds of him her imagination had painted as a hero, with less indifference to human suffering, than that with which the wife of the Sachem of the Narragansetts looked on the mimic representation of those exploits, which

had purchased for her husband a renown so highly prized. It was but too apparent that the representation, rude and savage as it was, conveyed to her mind nothing but pictures in which the chosen companion of a warrior should rejoice. The varying features and answering eye too plainly proclaimed the sympathy of one taught to exult in the success of the combatant, and when Whittal, excited by his own exertions, broke out into an exhibition of a violence more ruthless even than common, he was openly rewarded by another laugh. The soft, exquisitely feminine tones of this involuntary burst of pleasure, sounded in the ears of Ruth like a knell over the moral beauty of her child. Still subduing her feelings, she passed a hand thoughtfully over her own pallid brow, and appeared to muse long on the desolation of a mind, that had once promised to be so pure.

The colonists had not yet severed all those natural ties which bound them to

the eastern hemisphere. Their legends, their pride and, in many instances, their memories, aided in keeping alive a feeling of amity, and it might be added of faith, in favour of the land of their ancestors. With some of their descendants, even to the present hour, the *beau ideal* of excellence, in all that pertains to human qualities and human happiness, is connected with the images of the country from which they sprung. Distance is known to cast a softening mist, equally over the moral and physical vision. The blue outline of mountain which melts into its glowing back-ground of sky, is not more pleasing than the pictures which fancy sometimes draws of less material things, but, as he draws near, the disappointed traveller too often finds nakedness and deformity, where he so fondly imagined beauty only was to be seen. No wonder then that the dwellers of the simple provinces of New England blended recollections of the country they

still called home, with most of their poetical pictures of life. They retained the language, the books, and most of the habits of the English. But different circumstances, divided interests, and peculiar opinions were gradually beginning to open those breaches, which time has since widened, and which promises soon to leave little in common between the two people, except the same forms of speech and a common origin: it is to be hoped that some charity may be blended with these ties.

The singularly restrained habits of the religionists, throughout the whole of the British provinces, were in marked opposition to the mere embellishments of life. The arts were permitted only as they served its most useful and obvious purposes. With them, music was confined to the worship of God, and, for a long time after the original settlement, the song was never known to lead the mind astray, from what was conceived to be

the one great object of existence. No verse was sung, but such as blended holy ideas with the pleasures of harmony, nor were the sounds of revelry ever heard within their borders. Still words adapted to their particular condition had come into use, and though poetry was neither a common, nor a brilliant property of the mind, among a people thus disciplined in ascetic practises, it early exhibited its power in quaint versification, that was always intended, though with a success it is almost pardonable to doubt, to redound to the glory of the Deity. It was but a natural enlargement of this pious practice to adapt some of these spiritual songs to the purposes of the nursery.

When Ruth Heathcote passed her hand thoughtfully across her brow, it was with a painful conviction that her dominion over the mind of her child was sadly weakened, if not lost forever. But the efforts of maternal love are not easily re-

pulsed. An idea flashed upon her brain, and she proceeded to try the efficacy of the experiment it suggested. Nature had endowed her with a melodious voice, and an ear that taught her to regulate sounds in a manner that seldom failed to touch the heart. She possessed the genius of music, which is melody, unweakened by those exaggerated affectations with which it is often encumbered by what is pretendingly called science. Drawing her daughter nearer to her knee, she commenced one of the songs then much used by the mothers of the Colony, her voice scarcely rising above the whispering of the evening air, in its first notes, but gradually gaining, as she proceeded, the richness and compass that a strain so simple required.

At the first low breathing notes of this nursery song, Narra-Mattah became as motionless as if her rounded and unfettered form, had been wrought in marble. Pleasure lighted her eyes, as strain suc-

ceeded strain, and ere the second verse was ended, her look, her attitude, and every muscle of her ingenuous features were eloquent, in the expression of delight. Ruth did not hazard the experiment without trembling for its result. Emotion imparted feeling to the music, and when for the third time in the course of her song, she addressed her child, she saw the soft blue eyes that gazed wistfully on her face, swimming in tears. Encouraged by this unequivocal evidence of success, nature grew still more powerful in its efforts, and the closing verse was sung to an ear that nestled near her heart, as it had often done during the early years of Narra-Mattah while listening to its melancholy melody.

Content was a quiet but an anxious witness of this touching evidence of a reviving intelligence, between his wife and child. He best understood the look that beamed in the eyes of the former,

while her arms were, with extreme caution, folded around her who still leaned upon her bosom, as if fearful one so timid might be frightened from her security by any sudden, or unaccustomed interruption. A minute passed in the deepest silence. Even Whittal Ring was lulled into quiet, and long and sorrowing years had passed, since Ruth enjoyed moments of happiness so pure and unalloyed. The stillness was broken by a heavy step in the outer room; a door was thrown open, by a hand more violent than common, and then young Mark appeared, his face flushed with exertion, his brow seemingly retaining the frown of battle, and with a tread that betrayed a spirit goaded by some fierce and unwelcome passion. The burthen of Conanchet was on his arm. He laid it upon a table; then pointing, in a manner that appeared to challenge attention, he turned, and left the room as abruptly as he had entered.

A cry of joy burst from the lips of Narra-Mattah, the instant the beaded belts caught her eye. The arms of Ruth relaxed their hold in surprise, and before amazement had time to give place to more connected ideas, the wild being at her knee, had flown to the table, returned, resumed her former posture, opened the folds of the cloth, and was holding before the bewildered gaze of her mother, the patient features of an Indian babe.

It would exceed the powers of the unambitious pen we wield to convey to the reader, a just idea of the mixed emotions that struggled for mastery in the countenance of Ruth. The innate and never dying sentiment of maternal joy, was opposed, by all those feelings of pride, that prejudice could not fail to implant, even in the bosom of one so meek. There was no need to tell the history of the parentage of the little suppliant, who already looked up into her face, with that peculiar calm, which renders

his race so remarkable. Though its glance was weakened by infancy, the dark glittering of eye Conanchet was there; there were also to be seen the receding forehead, and the compressed lip of the father; but all these marks of his origin were softened by touches of that beauty which had rendered the infancy of her own child so remarkable.

"See!" said Narra-Mattah, raising the infant still nearer to the rivetted gaze of Ruth; "'Tis a Sachem of the red men! The little eagle hath left his nest, too soon."

Ruth could not resist the appeal of her beloved. Bending her head low, so as entirely to conceal her own flushed face, she imprinted a kiss on the forehead of the Indian boy. But the jealous eye of the young mother was not to be deceived. Narra-Mattah detected the difference between the cold salute, and those fervent embraces she had herself received, and disappointment produced a chill about

her own heart. Replacing the folds of the cloth with quiet dignity, she arose from her knees, and withdrew in sadness to a distant corner of the room. There she took a seat, and with a glance that might almost be termed reproachful, she commenced a low Indian song to her infant.

"The wisdom of Providence is in this, as in all its dispensations;" whispered Content over the shoulder of his nearly insensible partner. "Had we received her as she was lost, the favour might have exceeded our deservings. Our daughter is grieved, that thou turnest a cold eye on her babe."

The appeal was sufficient for one whose affections had been wounded rather than chilled. It recalled Ruth to recollection, and it served at once to dissipate the shades of regret that had been unconsciously permitted to gather around her brow. The displeasure, or it would be more true to term it sorrow, of the young mother was easily appeased. A smile on

her infant, brought the blood back to her heart in a swift and tumultuous current, and Ruth, herself, soon forgot that she had any reason for regret, in the innocent delight, with which her own daughter now hastened to display the physical excellence of the boy. From this scene of natural feeling, Content was too quickly summoned by the intelligence that some one without, awaited his presence, on business of the last importance to the welfare of the settlement.

CHAPTER VII.

"It will have blood; they say, blood
Will have blood—

Macbeth

The visitors were Dr. Ergot, the Rev. Meek Wolf, Ensign Dudley and Reuben Ring. Content found these four individuals seated in an outer room, in a grave and restrained manner, that would have done no discredit to the self-command of an Indian council. He was saluted with those staid and composed greetings which are still much used in the intercourse of the people of the Eastern States of this Republic, and which have obtained for

them a reputation, where they are little known, of a want of the more active charities of our nature. But that was peculiarly the age of sublimated doctrines, of self-mortification, and of severe moral government, and most men believed it a merit to exhibit, on all occasions, the dominion of the mind over the mere animal impulses. The usage, which took its rise in exalted ideas of spiritual perfection, has since grown into a habit, which though weakened by the influence of the age, still exists to a degree, that often leads to an erroneous estimate of character.

At the entrance of the Master of the house, there was some such decorous silence as that which is known to precede the communications of the Aborigines. At length Ensign Dudley, in whom matter, most probably in consequence of its bulk, bore more than an usual proportion to his less material part, manifested some evidences of impatience that the di-

vine should proceed to business. Thus admonished, or possibly conceiving that a sufficient concession had been made to the dignity of man's nature, Meek opened his mouth to speak.

"Capt. Content Heathcote," he commenced, with that mystical involution of his subject, which practice had rendered nearly inseparable from all his communications; "Capt. Content Heathcote, this hath been a day of awful visitations, and of gracious temporal gifts. The heathen hath been smitten severely by the hand of the believer; and the believer hath been made to pay the penalty of his want of faith, by the infliction of a savage agency. Azazel hath been loosened in our village, the legions of wickedness have been suffered to go at large in our fields, and yet the Lord hath remembered his people, and hath borne them through a trial of blood, as perilous as was the passage of his chosen nation through the billows of the Red Sea. There is cause

of mourning and cause of joy in this manifestation of his will; of sorrow that we have merited his anger, and of rejoicing that enough of redeeming grace hath been found to save the Gomorrah of our hearts. But I speak to one trained in spiritual discipline, and schooled in the vicissitudes of the world, and further discourse is not necessary to quicken his apprehension. We will therefore turn to more instant and temporal exercises. Have all of thy household escaped unharmed throughout the strivings of this bloody day? "

"We praise the Lord that such hath been his pleasure," returned Content. "Other than as sorrow hath assailed us through the mourning of friends, the blow hath fallen lightly on me and mine. "

"Thou hast had thy season; the parent ceaseth to chastise while former punishments are remembered. But here is Sergeant Ring, with matter to commu-

nicate, that may still leave business for thy courage and thy wisdom."

Content turned his quiet look upon the yeoman, and seemed to await his speech. Reuben Ring, who was a man of many solid and valuable qualities, would most probably have been exercising the military functions of his brother in law, at that very moment, had he been equally gifted with a fluent discourse. But his feats lay rather in doing than in speaking, and the tide of popularity had, in consequence, set less strongly in his favour, than might have happened had the reverse been the case. The present, however, was a moment when it was necessary to overcome his natural reluctance to speak, and it was not long before he replied to the inquiring glance of his commander's eye.

"The Captain knows the manner in which we scourged the savages at the southern end of the valley," the sturdy yeoman began, "and it is not necessary to deal with

the particulars at length. There were six and twenty red skins slain in the meadows, besides as many more that left the ground in the arms of their friends. As for the people, we got a few hurts, but each man came back on his own limbs."

"This is much as the matter hath been reported."

"Then there was a party sent to brush the woods on the trail of the Indians," resumed Reuben, without appearing to regard the interruption. "The scouts broke off in pairs, in the duty, and finally men got to searching singly, of which number I was one. The two men of whom there is question —

"Of what men dost speak?" demanded Content.

"The two men of whom there is question," returned the other, continuing the direct course of his own manner of relating events, without appearing to see the necessity of connecting the threads of his communication; "the

men of whom I have spoken to the Minister and the Ensign —”

“Proceed,” said Content, who understood his man.

“After one of these men was brought to his end, I saw no reason for making the day bloodier than it already was, the more especially as the Lord had caused it to begin with a merciful hand which shed its bounties on my own dwelling. Under such an opinion of right-doing, the other was bound and led into the clearings.”

“Thou hast made a captive?”

The lips of Reuben scarce severed as he muttered a low assent, but the Ensign Dudley took upon himself the duty of entering into further explanations, which the point where his kinsman left the narrative, enabled him to do with sufficient intelligence.

“As the Sergeant hath related,” he said, “one of the heathen fell, and the other is now without, awaiting a judg-

ment, in the matter of his fortune."

"I trust there is no wish to harm him," said Content, glancing an eye uneasily around at his companions. "Strife hath done enough in our settlement this day. The Sergeant hath a right to claim the scalp-bounty, for the man that is slain, but for him that liveth, let there be mercy!"

"Mercy is a quality of Heavenly origin," replied Meek Wolfe, "and it should not be perverted to defeat the purposes of Heavenly wisdom. Azazel must not triumph, though the tribe of the Narragansetts should be swept with the besom of destruction. Truly we are an erring and a fallible race, Capt. Heathcote, and the greater, therefore, the necessity that we submit, without rebellion, to the inward monitors that are implanted, by grace, to teach us the road of our duty—"

"I cannot consent to shed blood, now that the strife hath ceased," hastily in-

interrupted Content. "Praised be Providence! we are victors: and it is time to lean to councils of charity."

"Such are the deceptions of a short-sighted wisdom!" returned the divine, his dim, sunken eye, shining with the promptings of an exaggerated and subtle spirit. "The end of all is good, and we may not, without mortal danger, presume to doubt the suggestions of Heavenly gifts. But there is not question here concerning the execution of the captive, since he proffereth to be of service in far greater things than any that can depend on his life or death. The heathen rendered up his liberty with little struggle, and hath propositions that may lead us to a profitable conclusion of this day's trials."

"If he can aid in aught that shall shorten the perils and wantonness of this ruthless war, he shall find none better disposed to listen than I."

"He professeth ability to do that service "

“Then, of Heaven’s mercy ! let him be brought forth, that we counsel on his proposals.”

Meek made a gesture to Sergeant Ring, who quitted the apartment for a moment, and shortly after returned followed by his captive. The Indian was one of those dark and malignant looking savages that possess most of the sinister properties of their condition, with few or none of the redeeming qualities. His eye was lowering and distrustful, bespeaking equally apprehension and revenge ; his form of that middling degree of perfection, which leaves as little to admire as to condemn, and his attire such as denoted him one who might be ranked among the warriors of a secondary class. Still in the composure of his mien, the tranquillity of his step, and the self possession of all his movements, he displayed that high bearing, his people rarely fail to exhibit, ere too much intercourse with the whites begins to destroy their distinctive traits.

"Here is the Narragansett," said Reuben Ring, causing his prisoner to appear in the centre of the room;" he is no chief, as may be gathered from his uncertain look."

"If he effect that of which there hath been question, his rank mattereth little. We seek to stop the currents of blood that flow like running water, in these devoted Colonies."

"This will he do," rejoined the divine," or we shall hold him answerable for breach of promise."

"And in what doth he profess to aid in stopping the work of death?"

"By yielding the fierce Philip, and his savage ally, the roving Conanchet, to the judgment. Those chiefs destroyed, our temple may be entered in peace, and the voice of thanksgiving shall again rise in our Bethel, without the profane interruption of savage shrieks."

Content started, and even recoiled a step, as he listened to the nature of the proposed peace-offering.

“And have we warrant for such a proceeding, should this man prove true!” he asked, in a voice that sufficiently denoted his own doubts of the propriety of such a measure.

“There is the law, the necessities of a suffering nature, and God’s glory for our justification,” drily, returned the divine.

“This out-steppeth the discreet exercise of a delegated authority. I like not to assume so great power, without written mandates for its execution.”

“The objection hath raised a little difficulty in my own mind,” observed Ensign Dudley; “and as it hath set thoughts at work, it is possible that what I have to offer will meet the Captain’s good approbation.”

Content knew that his ancient servitor was, though often uncouth in its exhibition, at the bottom a man of humane heart. On the other hand, while he scarce admitted the truth to himself, he had a secret dread of the exaggerated senti-

ments of his spiritual guide, and he consequently listened to the interruption of Eben, with a gratification he scarcely wished to conceal.

“Speak openly,” he said; “when men counsel in a matter of this weight, each standeth on the surety of his proper gifts.”

“Then may this business be despatched without the embarrassment the captain seems to dread. We have the Indian, who offers to lead a party through the forests to the haunts of the bloody chiefs, therein bringing affairs to the issue of manhood and discretion.

“And wherein do you propose any departure from the suggestions that have already been made?”

Ensign Dudley had not risen to his present rank without acquiring a suitable portion of the reserve, which is so often found to dignify official sentiments. Having ventured the opinion already placed, however vaguely, before his hearers, he

was patiently awaiting its effects on the mind of his superior, when the latter by his earnest and unsuspecting countenance, no less than by the question just given, shewed that he was still in the dark as to the expedient the subaltern wished to suggest.

“I think there will be no necessity for making more captives,” resumed Eben,” since the one we have, appears to create difficulties in our councils. If there be any law in the Colony, which says that men must strike with a gentle hand in open battle, it is a law but little spoken of in common discourse; and though no pretender to the wisdom of legislators, I will make bold to add, it is a law that may as well be forgotten, until this out-breaking of the savages shall be quelled.”

“We deal with an enemy that never stays his hand at the cry of mercy,” observed Meek Wolfe, “and though Charity be the fruit of christian qualities, there is a duty greater than any which

belongeth to earth. We are no more than weak and feeble instruments in the hands of Providence, and as such our minds should not be hardened to our inward promptings. If evidence of better feeling could be found in the deeds of the heathen, we might raise our hopes to the completion of things; but the Powers of Darkness still rage in their hearts, and we are taught to believe that the tree is known by its fruits."

Content signed to all to await his return, and left the room. In another minute he was seen leading his daughter into the centre of the circle. The half alarmed young woman clasped her swaddled boy to her bosom, as she gazed timidly at the grave faces of the borderers, and her eye recoiled in fear, when its hurried glance met the sunken, glazed, excited, and yet equivocal-looking organ of the Rev. Mr. Wolfe.

"Thou hast said that the savage never hearkens to the cry of mercy," resumed

Content; "here is living evidence that thou hast spoken in error. The misfortune that early befel my family is not unknown to any in this settlement; thou seest in this trembling creature, the daughter of our love; her we have so long mourned. The wept of my household is again with us; our hearts have been oppressed, they are now gladdened. God hath returned our child!"

There was a deep, rich, pathos in the tones of the father that affected most of his auditors, though each manifested his sensibilities in a mannersuited to his particular habits of mind. The nature of the divine was touched, and all the energies of his severe principles were wanting to sustain him above the manifestation of a weakness that he might have believed derogatory to his spiritual exaltation of character. He therefore sat mute, with hands folded on his knee, betraying the struggles of an awakened sympathy only by a firmer compression of the in-

terlocked fingers, and an occasional and involuntary movement of the stronger muscles of the face. Dudley suffered a smile of pleasure to lighten his broad, open countenance, and the physician, who had hitherto been merely a listener, uttered a few low syllables of admiration of the physical perfection of the being before him, with which there was mingled some evidence of natural good feeling.

Reuben Ring was the only individual who openly betrayed the whole degree of the interest he took in the restoration of the lost female. The stout yeoman arose, and moving to the entranced Narra-Mattah, he took the infant into his large hands, and for a moment the honest borderer gazed at the boy, with a wistful and softened eye. Then raising the diminutive face of the infant to his own expanded and bold features, he touched its cheek with his lips, and returned the babe to its mother, who witnessed the

whole proceeding, in some such tribulation, as the startled wren exhibits, when the foot of the urchin is seen to draw too near the nest of its young.

“Thou seest that the hand of the Nar-ragansett hath been stayed,” said Content; when a deep silence had succeeded this little movement and speaking in a tone which betrayed hopes of victory.

“The ways of Providence are mysterious!” returned Meek; “wherein they bring comfort to the heart, it is right that we exhibit gratitude, and wherein they are charged with present affliction, it is meet to bow with humbled spirits to their orderings. But the visitations on families are merely —”

He paused, for at that moment a door opened, and a party entered bearing a burthen which they deposited, with decent and grave respect, on the floor, in the very centre of the room. The unceremonious manner of the entrance, the assured and the common gravity of their air pro-

claimed that the villagers felt their errand to be a sufficient apology for this intrusion. Had not the business of the past day naturally led to such a belief, the manner and aspects of those who had borne the burthen, would have announced it to be a human body.

“ I had believed that none fell in this day’s strife, but those who met their end near my own door,” said Content, after a long, respectful and sorrowing pause. “ Remove the face-cloth, that we may know on whom the blow hath fallen.”

One of the young men obeyed. It was not easy to recognise, through the mutilations of savage barbarity, the features of the sufferer. But a second and steadier look showed the gory and still agonised countenance of the individual who had, that morning, left the Wish-Ton-Wish on the message of the colonial authorities. Even men as practised as those present, in the horrible inventions of Indian cruelty, turned sickening away from a

spectacle that was calculated to chill the blood of all who had not become callous to human affliction. Content made a sign to cover the miserable remnants of mortality-and hid his face, with a shudder.

It is not necessary to dwell on the scene that followed. Meek Wolfe availed himself of this unexpected event, to press his plan on the attention of the commanding officer of the settlement, who was certainly far better disposed to listen to his proposals, than before this palpable evidence of the ruthless character of their enemies was presented to his view. Still Content listened with reluctance, nor was it without the intention of exercising an ulterior discretion in the case, that he finally consented to give orders for the departure of a body of men, with the approach of the morning light. As much of the discourse was managed with those half intelligible allusions that distinguished men of their habits, it is probable that every individual present had his own

particular views of the subject; though it is certain, one and all, faithfully believed that he was solely influenced by a justifiable regard to his temporal interest, which was in some degree rendered still more praise-worthy, by a reference to the service of his Divine Master.

As the party returned, Dudley lingered a moment, alone, with his former master. The face of the honest-meaning Ensign was charged with more than its usual significance, and he even paused a little, after all were beyond hearing, ere he could muster resolution to propose the subject that was so evidently uppermost in his mind.

“Capt. Content Heathcote,” he at length commenced, “evil or good come not alone in this life. Thou hast found her that we sought, with so much pain and danger, but thou hast found with her, more than a christian gentleman can desire. I am a man of humble station, but I may make bold to know what

should be the feelings of a father, whose child is restored, replenished by such an over-bountiful gift."

"Speak plainer," said Content, firmly.

"Then I would say, that it may not be grateful to one who taketh his place among the best in this colony, to have an offspring with an Indian cross of blood, and over whose birth no rite of christian marriage hath been said. Here is Abundance, a woman of exceeding usefulness in a newly settled region, hath made Reuben a gift of three noble boys this very morning. The accession is little known, and less discoursed of, in that the good wife is accustomed to such liberality and that the day hath brought forth still greater events. Now a child, more or less, to such a woman, can neither raise question among the neighbours, nor make any extraordinary difference to the household. My brother Ring would be happy to add the boy to his stock, and should there be any remarks con-

cerning the colour of the younker, at a future day, it should give no reason of surprise, had the whole four been born, on the day of such an inroad, red as Metacom himself!"

Content heard his companion to the end without interruption. His countenance, for a single instant, as the meaning of the Ensign became unequivocal, reddened with a wordly feeling to which he had long been a stranger; but the painful expression as quickly disappeared, and in its place reigned the meek submission to Providence, that habitually characterized his mien.

"That I have been troubled with this vain thought, I shall not deny," he answered; "but the Lord hath given me strength to resist. It is his will that one sprung of heathen lineage shall come beneath my roof, and let his will be done! My child, and all that are hers, are welcome."

Ensign Dudley pressed the point no further, and they separated.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Tarry a little ;— There is something else —."

Merchant of Venice

We shift the scene. The reader will transport himself from the valley of the Wish-Ton-Wish, to the bosom of a deep and dark wood. .

It may be thought that such scenes have been too often described to need any repetition. Still, as it is possible that these pages may fall into the hands of some who have never quitted the older members of the Union, we shall endeavour to give them a faint impression

concerning the appearance of the place, to which it has become our duty to transfer the action of the tale.

Although it is certain that inanimate, like animate nature, has its period, the existence of the tree has no fixed and common limit. The oak, the elm and the linden, the quick-growing sycamore and the tall pine has each its own laws for the government of its growth, its magnitude, and its duration. By this provision of nature, the wilderness, in the midst of so many successive changes, is always maintained at the point nearest to perfection, since the accessions are so few and gradual, as to preserve its character.

The American forest exhibits in the highest degree the grandeur of repose. As nature never does violence to its own laws, the soil throws out the plant which it is best qualified to support, and the eye is not often disappointed by a sickly vegetation. There ever seems a generous emulation in the trees, which is not to

be found among others of different families, when left to pursue their quiet existence in the solitude of the fields. Each struggles towards the light, and an equality in bulk and a similarity in form are thus produced, which scarce belong to their distinctive characters. The effect may easily be imagined. The vaulted arches beneath, are filled with thousands of high, unbroken columns, which sustain one vast and trembling canopy of leaves. A pleasing gloom and an imposing silence have their interminable reign below, while an outer and another atmosphere seems to rest on the cloud of foliage.

While the light plays on the varying surface of the tree-tops, one sombre and little-varied hue colours the earth. Dead and moss-covered logs; mounds covered with decomposed vegetable substances, the graves of long past generations of trees; cavities left by the fall of some uprooted trunk; dark fungi that flourish around the decayed roots of those about

to loose their hold, with a few slender and delicate plants of a minor growth, and which best succeed in the shade, form the accompaniments of the lower scene. The whole is tempered, and in summer rendered grateful, by a freshness which equals that of the subterranean vault, without possessing any of its chilling dampness. In the midst of this gloomy solitude, the foot of man is rarely heard. An occasional glimpse of the bounding deer, or trotting moose, is almost the only interruption on the earth itself, while the heavy bear or leaping panther, is, at long intervals, met seated on the branches of some venerable tree. There are moments, too, when troops of hungry wolves are found hunting on the trail of the deer, but these are seen rather as exceptions to the stillness of the place, than as accessories that should properly be introduced into the picture. Even the birds are, in common, mute, or when they do break the

silence, it is in a discordance that suits the character of their wild abode.

Through such a scene two men were industriously journeying, on the day which succeeded the inroad last described. They marched as wont, one after the other, the younger and more active leading the way, through the monotony of the woods, as accurately and as unhesitatingly, as the mariner directs his course by the aid of the needle over the waste of waters. He in front was light, agile and seemingly unwearied, while the one who followed was a man of heavy mould, whose step denoted less practice in the exercise of the forest, and possibly some failing of natural vigor.

"Thine eye, Narragansett, is an unerring compass by which to steer, and thy leg a never wearied steed;" said the latter, casting the butt of his musket on the end of a mouldering log, while he leaned on the barrel for support. "If thou movest on the war-path with the same dili-

gence, as this thou usest in our errand of peace, well may the colonists dread thy enmity."

The other turned, and without seeking aid from the gun which rested against his shoulder, he pointed at the several objects he named, and answered —

"My father is this aged sycamore; it leans against the young oak. — Conan-chet is a straight pine. There is great cunning in gray hairs," added the chief, stepping lightly forward until a finger rested on the arm of Submission; "can they tell the time when we shall lie under the moss like a dead hemlock?"

"That exceedeth the wisdom of man. It is enough, Sachem, if when we fall, we may say with truth, that the land we shadowed is no poorer for our growth. Thy bones will lie in the earth where thy fathers trod, but mine may whiten in the vault of some gloomy forest."

The quiet of the Indian's face was disturbed. The pupils of his dark eyes con-

tracted, his nostrils dilated, and his full chest heaved, and then all reposed, like the sluggish ocean, after a vain effort to heave its waters into some swelling wave, during a general calm.

“Fire hath scorched the prints of my father’s moccasins from the earth,” he said, with a smile that was placid though bitter, “and my eyes cannot find them. I shall die under that shelter,” pointing through an opening in the foliage to the blue void; “the falling leaves will cover my bones.”

“Then hath the Lord given us a new bond of friendship. There is a yew tree and a quiet church yard in a country afar, where generations of my race sleep in their graves. The place is white with stones that bear the name of——”

Submission suddenly ceased to speak, and when his eye was raised to that of his companion, it was just in time to detect the manner in which the curious interest of the latter changed suddenly

to cold reserve, and to note the high courtesy of the air with which the Indian turned the discourse.

"There is water beyond the little hill," he said, "Let my father drink and grow stronger, that he may live to lie in the clearings.

The other bowed and they proceeded to the spot in silence. It would seem by the length of time that was now lost in taking the required refreshment, that the travellers had journeyed long and far. The Narragansett ate more sparingly however than his companion, for his mind appeared to sustain a weight that was far more grievous than the fatigue which had been endured by the body. Still his composure was little disturbed, outwardly, for during the silent repast he maintained the air of a dignified warrior, rather than that of a man whose air could be much effected by inward sorrow. When nature was appeased they both arose, and continued their route through the pathless forest.

For an hour after quitting the spring, the progress of our two adventurers was swift, and uninterrupted by any passing observation, or momentary pause. At the end of that time, however, the speed of Conanchet began to slacken, and his eye, instead of maintaining its steady and forward direction, was seen to wander with some of the appearance of indecision.

"Thou hast lost those secret signs by which we have so far threaded the woods," observed his companion; "one tree is alike another, and I see no difference in this wilderness of nature; but if thou art at fault, we may truly despair of our object."

"Here is the nest of the eagle," returned Conanchet pointing at the object he named perched on the upper and whitened branches of a dead pine; "and my father may see the council tree in this oak — but there are no Wompanoags!"

“There are many eagles in this forest, nor is that oak one that may not have its fellow. Thine eye hath been deceived, Sachem, and some false sign hath led us astray.”

Conanchet looked at his companion attentively. After a moment he quietly asked —

“Did my father ever mistake his path, in going from his wigwam to the place where he looked upon the house of his Great Spirit?”

“The matter of that often travelled path was different, Narragansett. My foot had worn the rock with many passings, and the distance was a span. But we have journeyed through leagues of forest, and our route hath lain across brook and hill, through brake and morass, where human vision hath not been able to detect the smallest sign of the presence of man.”

“My father is old,” said the Indian respectfully. “His eye is not as quick

as when he took the scalp of the Great Chief, or he would know the print of a moccasin—see,” making his companion observe the mark of a human foot that was barely discernible by the manner in which the dead leaves had been displaced;” his rock is worn, but it is harder than the ground. He cannot tell by its signs who passed, or when.”

“Here is truly that which ingenuity may pourtray as the print of man’s foot; but it is alone, and may be some accident of the wind.”

“Let my father look on every side, he will see that a tribe hath passed.”

“This may be true, though my vision is unequal to detect that thou wouldst show. But if a tribe hath passed, let us follow.”

Conanchet shook his head and spread the fingers of his two hands in a manner to describe the radii of a circle.

“Hugh!” he said, starting even while he was thus significantly answering by gestures, “a moccasin comes!”

Submission, who had so often and so recently been arrayed against the savages, involuntarily sought the lock of his carabine. His look and action were menacing, though his roving eye could see no object to excite alarm.

Not so Conanchet. His quicker and more practised vision soon caught a glimpse of the warrior who was approaching, occasionally concealed by the trunks of trees, and whose tread on the dried leaves had first betrayed his proximity. Folding his arms on his naked bosom, the Narragansett chief awaited the coming of the other, in an attitude of calmness and dignity. Neither did he speak nor suffer a muscle to play until a hand was placed on one of his arms, and he who had drawn near, said in tones of amity and respect—

“The young Sachem hath come to look for his brother?”

“Wompanoag, I have followed the trail, that your ears may listen to the talk of a Pale face.”

The third person in this interview was Metacom. He shot a haughty and fierce glance at the stranger, and then turned to his companion in arms with recovered calmness to reply.

"Has Conanchet counted his young men since they raised the whoop?" he asked, in the language of the Aborigines. "I saw many go into the fields that never came back. Let the white man die."

"Wompanoag he is led by the wampum of a Sachem. I have not counted my young men; but I know that they are strong enough to say that what their chief hath promised, shall be done."

"If the Yengeese is a friend of my brother, he is welcome. The wigwam of Metacom is open; let him enter it."

Philip made a sign for the others to follow and led the way to the place he had named.

The spot chosen by Philip for his temporary encampment was suited to such a purpose. There was a thicket,

denser than common, on one of its sides; a steep and high rock protected and sheltered its rear; a swift and wide brook dashed over fragments that had fallen, with time, from the precipice in its front, and towards the setting sun, a whirlwind had opened a long and melancholy glade through the forest. A few huts of brush leaned against the base of the hill, and the scanty implements of their domestic economy were scattered among the habitations of the savages. The whole party did not number twenty, for, as has been said, the Wompanoag had acted latterly more by the agency of his allies, than with the materials of his own proper force.

The three were soon seated on a rock, whose foot was washed by the rapid current of the tumbling water. A few, gloomy-looking, and fierce Indians watched the conference, in the back ground.

“ My brother hath followed my trail that my ears may hear the words of a

Yengeese, " Philip commenced, after a sufficient period had elapsed to escape the imputation of curiosity. " Let him speak. "

" I have come singly into the jaws of the lion, restless and remorseless leader of the savages," returned the bold exile, " that you may hear the words of peace. Why hath the son seen the acts of the English so differently from the father? Massassoit was a friend of the persecuted and patient pilgrims, who have sought rest and refuge in this Bethel of the faithful, but thou hast hardened thy heart to their prayers, and seekest the blood of those who wish thee no wrong. Doubtless thy nature is one of pride and mistaken vanities, like that of all thy race, and it hath seemed needful to the vain-glory of thy name and nation to battle against men of a different origin. But know there is one who is master of all here on earth, as he is King of Heaven! It is his pleasure that the sweet savour

of his worship should arise from the wilderness. His will is law, and they that would withstand, do but kick against the pricks. Listen then to peaceful counsels, that the land may be parcelled justly, to meet the wants of all, and the country be prepared for the incense of the altar."

'This exhortation was uttered in a deep and almost unearthly voice, and with a degree of excitement that was probably increased by the intensity with which the solitary had lately been brooding over his peculiar opinions, and the terrible scenes in which he had so recently been an actor. Philip listened with the high courtesy of an Indian prince. Unintelligible as was the meaning of the speaker, his countenance betrayed no gleaming of impatience, his lip no smile of ridicule. On the contrary, a noble and lofty gravity reigned in every feature, and ignorant as he was of what the other wished to say, his attentive eye and

bending head expressed every wish to comprehend.

“ My pale friend hath spoken very wisely,” he said, when the other ceased to speak. “ But he doth not see clearly in these woods; he sits too much in the shade. His eye is better in a clearing. Metacom is not a fierce beast. His claws are worn out, his legs are tired with travelling. He cannot jump far. My pale friend wants to divide the land. Why trouble the Great Spirit to do his work twice. He gave the Wompanoags their hunting grounds, and places on the salt lake to catch their fish and clams, and he did not forget his children the Narragansetts. He put them in the midst of the water, for he saw that they could swim. Did he forget the Yengeese? or did he put them in a swamp, where they would turn into frogs and lizards? ”

“ Heathen, my voice shall never deny the bounties of my God! His hand hath placed my fathers in a fertile land, rich

in the good things of the world , fortunate in position , sea-girt and impregnable. Happy is he who can find justification in dwelling within its borders !”

An empty gourd lay on the rock at the side of Metacom. Bending over the stream, he filled it to the brim with water, and held the vessel before the eyes of his companions.

“See,” he said, pointing to the even surface of the fluid: “So much hath the Great Spirit said it shall hold. “Now,” he added, filling the hollow of the other hand from the brook, and casting its contents into the gourd, “now my brother knows that some must come away. It is so with his country. There is no longer room in it, for my pale friend.”

“Did I attempt to deceive thine ears with this tale, I should lay falsehood to my soul. We are many, and sorry am I to say that some among us are like unto them that were called, “Legion.” But to say that there is not still place for all to

die where they are born, is to utter damning untruth."

"The land of the Yengeese is then good—very good," returned Philip; "but their young men like one that is better."

"Thy nature Wompanoag is not equal to comprehend the motives which have led us hither, and our discourse is getting vain."

"My brother Conanchet is a Sachem. The leaves that fall from the trees of his country, in the season of frosts, blow into my hunting grounds. We are neighbours and friends," slightly bending his head to the Narragansett. "When a wicked Indian runs from the islands to the wigwams of my people, he is whipt and sent back. We keep the path between us open, only for honest red-men."

Philip spoke with a sneer, that his habitual loftiness of manner did not conceal from his associate chief, though it was so slight as entirely to escape the observation of him who was the subject

of his sarcasm. The former took the alarm, and for the first time during the dialogue did he break silence.

"My pale father is a brave warrior," said the young Sachem of the Narragansetts. "His hand took the scalp of the Great Sagamore of his people!"

The countenance of Metacom changed instantly. In place of the ironical scorn that was gathering about his lip, its expression became serious and respectful. He gazed steadily at the hard and weather-beaten features of his guest, and it is probable that words of higher courtesy than any he had yet used, would have fallen from him, had not, at that moment, a signal been given, by a young Indian set to watch on the summit of the rock, that one approached. Both Metacom and Conanchet appeared to hear this cry with some uneasiness. Neither however arose, nor did either betray such evidence of alarm as denoted a deeper interest in the interruption, than the cir-

cumstances might very naturally create. A warrior was shortly seen entering the encampment, from the side of the forest which was known to lie in the direction of the Wish-Ton-Wish.

The moment Conanchet saw the person of the newly arrived man, his eye and attitude resumed their former repose, though the look of Metacom still continued gloomy and distrustful. The difference in the manner of the chiefs was not however sufficiently strong, to be remarked by Submission, who was about to resume the discourse, when the new comer moved past the cluster of warriors in the encampment, and took his seat near them, on a stone so low, that the water laved his feet. As usual there was no greeting between the Indians, for some moments, the three appearing to regard the arrival as a mere thing of course. But the uneasiness of Metacom prompted a communication sooner than common.

"Mohtucket," he said, in the language of their tribe, "hath lost the trail of his friends. We thought the crows of the pale-men were picking his bones!"

"There was no scalp at his belt, and Mohtucket was ashamed to be seen among the young men, with an empty hand."

"He remembered that he had too often come back without striking a dead enemy," returned Metacom, about whose firm mouth lurked an expression of ill concealed contempt. "Has he now touched a warrior?"

The Indian, who was merely a man of the inferior class, held up the trophy which hung at his girdle to the examination of his chief. Metacom looked at the disgusting object, with the calmness, and nearly with the interest that a virtuoso would lavish on an antique memorial of some triumph of former ages. His finger was thrust through a hole in the skin; and then, while he resumed his former position, he observed dily—

"A bullet hath hit the head. The arrow of Mohtucket doth little harm!"

"Metacom hath never looked on his young man like a friend, since the brother of Mohtucket was killed."

The glance that Philip cast at his underling, though it was not unmingled with suspicion, was one of princely and savage scorn. Their white auditor had not been able to understand the discourse, but the dissatisfaction and uneasiness of the eyes of both, were too obvious not to show, that the conference was far from being amicable.

"The Sachem hath discontent with his young man," he observed, "and from this may he understand the nature of that which leadeth many to quit the land of their fathers beneath the rising sun, to come to this wilderness in the west. If he will now listen, I will touch further on the business of my errand, and deal more at large with the subject we have but so lightly skimmed."

Philip manifested attention. He smiled on his guest and even bowed his assent to the proposal; still his keen eye seemed to read the soul of his subordinate, through the veil of his gloomy visage. There was a play of the fingers of his right hand, when the arm fell from its position across his bosom, to his thigh, as if they itched to grasp the knife whose buck-horn handle lay within a few inches of their reach. Yet his air to the white man, was composed and dignified. The latter was again about to speak, when the arches of the forest suddenly rung with the report of a musket. All, in and near the encampment, sprung to their feet at the well known sound, and yet all continued as motionless as if so many dark but breathing statues had been planted there. The rustling of leaves was heard, and then the body of the young Indian, who had been posted on the rock, rolled to the edge of the precipice, whence it fell, like a log, on the yielding

roof of one of the lodges beneath. A shout issued from the forest behind, a volley roared among the trees, and glancing lead was whistling through the air, and cutting twigs from the undergrowth on every side. Two more of the Wompagoags were seen rolling on the earth, in the death-agony..

The voice of Annawon was heard in the encampment, and at the next instant the place was deserted..

During this startling and fearful moment, the four individuals, near the stream, were inactive. Conanchet and his christian friend stood to their arms, but it was rather as men cling to the means of defence, in moments of great jeopardy, than with any intention of offensive hostilities. Metacom seemed undecided. Accustomed to receive and inflict surprises, a warrior so experienced could not be disconcerted; still he hesitated as to the course he ought to take. But when Annawon, who was nearer the

scene, sounded the signal of retreat, he sprang towards the returned straggler, and with a single blow of his tomahawk brained the traitor. Glances of fierce revenge, and of inextinguishable though disappointed hatred, were exchanged between the victim and his chief, as the former lay on the rock gasping for breath, and then the latter turned, in his tracks, and raised the dripping weapon over the head of the white man.

“Wompanoag, no!” said Conauchet, in a voice of thunder. “Our lives are one.”

Philip hesitated. Fierce and dangerous passions were struggling in his breast, but the habitual self-command of the wily politician of those woods prevailed. Even in that scene of blood and alarm, he smiled on his powerful and fearless young ally; then pointing to the deepest shades of the forest, he bounded towards them with the activity of a deer.

CHAPTER IX.

“ But, peace be with him!
That life is better life, past fearing death,
Than that which lives to fear:
Measure for Measure.

ourage is both a comparative and an improvable virtue. If the fear of death be a weakness common to the race, it is one that is capable of being diminished by frequent exposure, and even rendered extinct by reflection. It was therefore with sensibilities entirely changed from their natural course, that the two individuals who were left alone by the retreat of Philip, saw the nature and the approach of the danger that now beset

them. Their position near the brook had so far protected them from the bullets of the assailants, but it was equally obvious to both, that in a minute or two the colonists would enter an encampment that was already deserted. Each, in consequence, acted according to those opinions which had been fostered by the habits of their respective lives.

As Conanchet had no act of vengeance, like that which Metacom had performed, immediately before his eyes, he had, at the first alarm, given all his faculties to the nature of the attack. The first minute was sufficient to understand its character and the second enabled him to decide.

"Come," he said hastily, but with perfect self-possession, pointing as he spoke to the swift-running stream at his feet; "we will go with the water; let the marks of our trail run before."

Submission hesitated. There was something like haughty, military pride in the stern determination of his eye, which

seemed reluctant to incur the disgrace of a flight so unequivocal, and as he might have believed, so unworthy of his character.

"No, Narragansett," he answered; "flee for thy life, but leave me to reap the harvest of my deeds. They can but leave my bones by the side of those of this traitor, at my feet."

The mien of Conanchet was neither excited, nor displeased. He quietly drew the corner of his light robe over a shoulder, and was about to resume his seat on the stone, from which he had but a minute before arisen, when his companion again urged him to fly.

"The enemies of a chief must not say that he led his friend into a trap, and that when his leg was fast he ran away, himself, like a lucky fox. If my brother stays to be killed, Conanchet will be found near him."

"Heathen, heathen!" returned the other, moved nearly to tears, by the loy-

alty of his guide; "many a christian man might take lessons from thy faith. Lead on; I will follow at the utmost of my speed."

The Narragansett sprung into the brook, and took its downward course, a direction opposite to that which Philip had chosen. There was wisdom in this expedient, for though their pursuers might see that the water was troubled, there was no certainty as to the direction of the fugitives. Conanchet had foreseen this little advantage, and with the instinctive readiness of his people he did not fail to make it of service. Metacom had been influenced by the course taken by his warriors, who had retired under shelter of the rocks.

Ere the two fugitives had gone any great distance, they heard the shouts of their enemies in the encampment, and soon after, scattering shot announced that Philip had already rallied his people to resistance. There was an assurance of

safety in the latter circumstance, which caused them to relax their speed.

“ My foot is not as active as in days that are past,” said Submission; “ we will therefore recover strength while we may, lest we be yet taken at emergency. Narragansett, thou hast ever kept thy faith with me, and come of what race, or worship in what manner thou may'st, there is one to remember it.”

“ My father looked with the eye of a friend on the Indian boy, that was kept like a young bear in a cage. He taught him to speak with the tongue of a Yengeese.”

“ We passed weary months together in our prison, chief, and Apollyon must have been strong in a heart, to resist the opportunity of friendship, in such a situation. But even there, my confidence and care were repaid, for without thy mysterious hints, gathered from signs thou hadst gleaned thyself during the hunt, it would not have been in my power to

have warned my friends, that thy people contemplated an attack the unhappy night of the burning. Narragansett, we have done many acts of kindness, each in his own fashion, and I am ready to confess this last not to be the least of thy favours. Though of white blood and of christian origin, I can almost say that my heart is Indian."

"Then die an Indian's death!" shouted a voice, within twenty feet of the spot where they were wading down the stream.

The menacing words were rather accompanied than seconded by a shot, and Submission fell. Comanchet cast his musket into the water and turned to raise his companion.

"It was merely age dealing with the slippery stones of the brook;" said the latter, as he recovered his footing. "That had well nigh been a fatal discharge! but God, for his own purpose, hath still averted the blow."

Conanchet did not speak. Seizing his gun, which lay at the bottom of the stream, he drew his friend after him to the shore, and plunged into the thicket that lined its banks. Here they were momentarily protected from missiles. But the shouts, that succeeded the discharge of the muskets, were accompanied by yells that he knew to proceed from Pequots and Mohegans, tribes that were in deadly hostility to his own people. The hope of concealing their trail from such pursuers was not to be indulged, and for his companion to escape by flight, he knew to be impossible. There was no time to lose. In such emergencies, with an Indian, thought takes the character of instinct. The fugitives stood at the foot of a sapling, whose top was completely concealed by masses of leaves, which belonged to the under brush that clustered around its trunk. Into this tree he assisted Submission to ascend, and then, without explaining his own views, he instantly

left the spot, rendering his own trail as broad and perceptible as possible, by beating down the bushes as he passed

The expedient of the faithful Narragansett was completely successful. Before he had got a hundred yards from the place, he saw the foremost of the hostile Indians hunting like blood hounds on his footsteps. His movement was slow until he saw that, having his person in view, all of the pursuers had passed the tree. Then the arrow parting from the bow was scarce swifter than his flight.

The pursuit now partook of all the exciting incidents and ingenious expedients of an Indian chase. Conanchet was soon hunted from his cover, and obliged to trust his person in the more open parts of the forest. Miles of hill and ravine, of plain, of rocks, of morass and stream, were crossed, and still the trained warrior held on his way, unbroken in spirit, and scarce wearied in limb. The merit of a savage, in such an employment,

rests more on his bottom than on his speed. The three or four colonists, who had been sent with the party of amicable Indians to intercept those who might attempt to escape down the stream, were early thrown out, and the struggle was now entirely between the fugitive and men equally practised in limb, and ingenious in expedient. •

The Pegnods had a great advantage in their number. The frequent doublings of the fugitive kept the chase within the circle of a mile, and as each of his enemies tired, there were always fresh pursuers to take his place. In such a contest, the result could not be questionable. After more than two hours of powerful exertion the foot of Conanchet began to fail, and his speed very sensibly to flag. Exhausted by efforts that had been nearly supernatural, the breathless warrior cast his person prostrate on the earth, and lay, for several minutes, as if he were dead.

During this breathing time, his throbbing pulses grew more calm, his heart beat less violently, and the circulation was gradually returning to the tranquil flow of nature, in a state of rest. It was at this moment, when his energies were recruited by rest, that the chief heard the tread of the moccasins on his trail. Rising, he looked back on the course over which he had just passed, with so much pain. But a single warrior was in view. Hope for an instant regained the ascendancy, and he raised his musket to fell his approaching adversary. The aim was cool, long, and it would have been fatal, had not the useless tick of the lock reminded him of the condition of the gun. He cast the wet and unserviceable piece away, and grasped his tomahawk; but a band of Pequots rushed into the rescue, rendering resistance, madness. Perceiving the hopelessness of his situation, the Sachem of the Narragansetts dropped his tomahawk, loosened his belt, and

advanced unarmed with, a noble resignation to meet his foes. In the next instant he was their prisoner.

"Bring me to your chief," said the captive, haughtily, when the common herd into whose hands he had fallen, would have questioned him on the subject of his companions, and of his own fate. "My tongue is used to speak with Sachems."

He was obeyed, and before an hour had passed, the renowned Conanchet stood confronted with his most deadly enemy.

The place of meeting was the deserted encampment of the band of Philip. Here most of the pursuers had already assembled, including all of the colonists who had been engaged in the expedition. The latter consisted of Meek Wolfe, Ensign Dudley, Sergeant Ring, and a dozen private men of the village.

The result of the enterprise was, by this time, generally known. Though

Metacom, its principal object, had escaped, yet when it was understood that the Sachem of the Narragansetts had fallen into their hands, there was not an individual of the party, who did not think his personal risk more than amply compensated. Though the Mohegans and Pequots restrained their exultation, lest the pride of their captive should be soothed by such an evidence of his importance, the white men drew around the prisoner, with an interest and a joy, they did not care to conceal. Still as he had yielded to an Indian, there was an affectation of leaving the chief to the clemency of his conquerors. Perhaps some deeply pondered schemes of policy had its influence, in this act of seeming justice.

When Conanchet was placed in the centre of the curious circle, he found himself immediately in presence of the principal chief of the tribe of the Mohegans. It was Uncas, son of that Uncas whose fortunes had also prevailed, aided

by the whites, in the conflict with his father, the hapless but noble Miantonimoh. Fate had now decreed that the same evil star, which had governed the destinies of the ancestor, should extend its influence to the second generation.

The race of Uncas, though weakened of its power and shorn of much of its peculiar grandeur, by a vicious alliance with the English, still retained most of the fine qualities of savage heroism. He, who now stood forth to receive his captive, was a warrior of middle age, of just proportions, of a grave though fierce aspect, and of an eye and countenance that expressed all those contradictory traits of character, which render the savage warrior almost as admirable as he is appalling. Until this moment, the rival chieftans had never met, except in the confusion of battle. For a few minutes, neither spoke. Each stood regarding the fine outlines, the eagle eye, the proud bearing, and the severe gravity of the

other, in secret admiration, but with a calmness so immovable, as entirely to conceal the workings of his thoughts. At length they began to assume mien suited to the part each was to enact in the coming scene. The countenance of Uncas became ironical and exulting, while that of his captive grew still more cold and unconcerned.

“My young men,” said the former, “have taken a fox, skulking in the bushes. His legs were very long; but he had no heart to use them.”

Conanchet folded his arms on his bosom, and the glance of his quiet eye seemed to tell his enemy, that devices so common were unworthy of them both. The other either understood its meaning, or loftier feelings prevailed; for he added, in a better taste—

“Is Conanchet tired of his life, that he comes among my young men?”

“Mohican,” said the Narragansett chief, “he has been there before; if

Uncas will count his warriors, he will see that some are wanting."

"There are no traditions among the Indians of the islands!" said the other, with an ironical glance at the chiefs near him. "They have never heard of Miantonimoh; they do not know such a field as the Sachem's plain!"

The countenance of the prisoner changed. For a single instant, it appeared to grow dark, as if a deep shadow were cast athwart it, and then every feature rested, as before, in dignified repose. His conqueror watched the play of his lineaments, and when he thought nature was getting the ascendancy, exultation gleamed about his own fierce eye; but when the self-possession of the Narragansett returned, he affected to think no more of an effort that had been fruitless.

"If the men of the islands know little," he continued, "it is not so with the Mohicans. There was once a great Sachem among the Narragansetts; he was

wiser than the beaver, swifter than the moose, and more cunning than the red fox. But he could not see into to-morrow. Foolish counsellors told him to go upon the war-path against the Pequots and Mohicans. He lost his scalp; it hangs in the smoke of my wigwam. We shall see if it will know the hair of its son. Nar-ragansett, here are wise men of the Pale-Faces; they will speak to you. If they offer a pipe, smoke; for tobacco is not plenty with your tribe."

Uncas then turned away, leaving his prisoner to the interrogatories of his white allies.

"Here is the look of Miantonimoh, Sergeant Ring," observed Ensign Dudley to his wife's brother, after he had contemplated, for a reasonable time, the features of the prisoner. "I see the eye and the tread of the father, in this young Sachem. And more, Sergeant Ring; the chief favors the boy we picked up, in the fields, some dozen years ago, and

kept in the block, for the matter of many months, caged like a young panther. Hast forgotten the night, Reuben, and the lad, and the block? A fiery oven is not hotter than that pile was getting, before we dove into the earth. I never fail to think of it, when the good minister is dealing powerfully with the punishments of the wicked, and the furnaces of Tophet!"

The silent yeoman comprehended the disconnected allusions of his relative, nor was he slow in seeing the palpable resemblance between their prisoner, and the Indian boy, whose person had once been so familiar to his eye. Admiration and surprise were blended in his honest face, with an expression that appeared to announce deep regret. As neither of these individuals, however, was the principal personage of their party, each was fain to remain an attentive and an interested observer of that which followed.

"Worshipper of Baal!" commenced

the sepulchral voice of the divine; "it has pleased the King of Heaven and Earth to protect his people! The triumph of thy evil nature hath been short, and now cometh the judgment."

These words were uttered to ears that affected deafness. In the presence of his most deadly foe, and a captive, Conanchet was not a man to suffer his resolution to waver. He looked coldly and vacantly on the speaker, nor could the most suspicious, or the most practised eye have detected in his mien, his knowledge of the English language. Deceived by the stoicism of the prisoner, Meek muttered a few words, in which the Narragansett was strangely dealt by, denunciations and petitions in his favor being blended in the quaint and exaggerated fashions of the times, and then he submitted to the interference of those present, who were charged with the duty of deciding on the fate of the Indian.

Although Eben Dudley was the prin-

cipal and the efficient military man in this little expedition from the valley, he was accompanied by those whose authority was predominant, in all matters that did not strictly appertain to the executive portion of the duty. Commissioners, named by the Government of the Colony, had come out with the party, clothed with power to dispose of Philip, should that dreaded chief, as was expected, fall into the hands of the English. To these persons the fate of Conanchet was now referred.

We shall not detain the narrative to dwell on the particulars of the council. The question was gravely considered, and it was decided with a deep and conscientious sense of the responsibility of those who acted as judges. Several hours were passed in deliberation, Meek opening and closing the deliberations by solemn prayers. The judgment was then announced to Uncas, by the divine himself.

"The wise men of my people have consulted together, in the matter of this Narragansett," he said, "and their spirits have wrestled powerfully with the subject. In coming to their conclusion, if it wear the aspect of time-serving, let all remember, the Providence of Heaven hath so interwoven the interests of man, with its own good purposes, that to the carnal eye they may outwardly seem to be inseparable. But that which is here done, is done in good faith to our ruling principles, which is good faith to thee, and to all others who support the altar in this wilderness. And herein is our decision: We commit the Narragansett to thy justice, since it is evident that while he is at large, neither thou, who art a feeble prop to the church in these regions, nor we, who are its humble and unworthy servitors, are safe. Take him, then, and deal with him according to thy wisdom. We place limits to thy power, in only two things. It is not meet that any born

of humanity, and having human sensibilities, should suffer more in the flesh than may be necessary to the ends of duty; we therefore decree that thy captive shall not die by torture, and for the better security of this our charitable decision, two of our number shall accompany thee and him, to the place of execution; it being always supposed it is thy intention to inflict the pains of death. Another condition of this concession to a foreordered necessity, is that a christian minister may be at hand, in order that the sufferer may depart with the prayers of one accustomed to lift his voice, in petitions, to the footstool of the Almighty."

The Mohegan chief heard this sentence with deep attention. When he found he was to be denied the satisfaction of proving, or perhaps of overcoming the resolution of his enemy, a deep cloud passed across his swarthy visage. But the strength of his tribe had long been broken, and to resist, would have been as unprofi-

table, as to repine would have been unseemly. The conditions were therefore accepted, and preparations were accordingly made, among the Indians, to proceed to judgment.

These people had few contradictory principles to appease, and no subtleties to distract their decision. Direct, fearless, and simple in all their practices, they did little more than gather the voices of the chiefs, and acquaint their captive with the result. They knew that fortune had thrown an implacable enemy into their hands, and they believed that self-preservation demanded his life. To them it mattered little whether he had arrows in his hands, or had yielded himself an unarmed prisoner. He knew the risk he run in submitting, and he had probably consulted his own character, rather than their benefit, in throwing away his arms. They therefore pronounced the judgment of death against their captive, merely respecting the decree of their white allies,

which had commanded them to spare the torture.

So soon as this determination was known, the Commissioners of the Colony hastened away from the spot, with consciences that required some aid from the stimulus of their subtle doctrines, in order to render them quiet. They were, however, ingenious casuists, and as they hurried along their return path, most of the party were satisfied that they had rather manifested a merciful interposition, than exercised any act of positive cruelty.

During the two or three hours which had passed in these solemn and usual preparations, Conanchet was seated on a rock, a close, but apparently an unmoved, spectator of all that passed. His eye was mild, and at times melancholy; but its brightness and its steadiness remained unimpaired. When his sentence was announced it exhibited no change, and he saw all the pale men depart, with the calmness he had maintained throughout.

It was only as Uncas, attended by the body of his party, and the two white superintendents, who had been left, approached, that his spirit seemed to awaken.

“My people have said that there shall be no more wolves in the woods,” said Uncas; “and they have commanded our young men to slay the hungriest of them all.”

“It is well;” coldly returned the other.

A gleaming of admiration, and perhaps of humanity, came over the grim countenance of Uncas, as he gazed at the repose which reigned in the firm features of his victim. For an instant, his purpose wavered.

“The Mobicans are a great tribe!” he added; “and the race of Uncas is getting few. We will paint our brother so that the lying Narragansetts shall not know him, and he will be a warrior on the main land.”

This relenting of his enemy had a corresponding effect on the generous temper of Conanchet. The lofty pride deserted his eye, and his look became milder and more human. For a minute, intense thought brooded around his brow; the firm muscles of his mouth played a little, though scarcely enough to be seen, and then he spoke.

“Mohican,” he said, “why should your young men be in a hurry! My scalp will be the scalp of a Great Chief to-morrow. They will not take two, should they strike their prisoner now.”

“Hath Conanchet forgotten any thing, that he is not ready?”

“Sachem, he is always ready—But”—he paused, and spoke in tones that faltered, “—does a Mohican live alone?”

“How many suns doth the Narragansett ask?”

“One: when the shadow of that pine points towards the brook, Conanchet will be ready. He will then stand in its shade, with naked hands.”

“Go,” said Uncas, with dignity; “I have heard the words of a Sagamore.”

Conanchet turned, and passing swiftly through the silent crowd, his person was soon lost in the surrounding forest.

CHAPTER X.

"Therefore, lay bare your bosom."

Merchant of Venice

The night that succeeded was wild and melancholy. The moon was nearly full, but its place in the heavens was only seen, as the masses of vapour, which drove through the air, occasionally opened, suffering short gleams of fitful light to fall on the scene below. A south-western wind rather moaned, than sighed, through the forest, and there were moments when its freshness increased, till every leaf seemed a tongue, and

each low plant appeared to be endowed with the gift of speech. With the exception of these imposing, and not unpleasing natural sounds, there was a solemn quiet, in and about the village of the Wish-Ton-Wish. An hour before the moment when we resume the action of the legend, the sun had settled into the neighbouring forest, and most of its simple and laborious inhabitants had already sought their rest.

The lights however still shone through many of the windows of the "Heathcote House," as, in the language of the country, the dwelling of the Puritan was termed. There was the usual stirring industry, in and about the offices, and the ordinary calm was reigning in the superior parts of the habitation. A solitary man was to be seen on its piazza. It was young Mark Heathcote, who paced the long and narrow gallery, as if impatient of some interruption to his wishes. The uneasiness of the young man was

of short continuance, for ere he had been many minutes at his post, a door opened, and two light and timid forms glided out of the house.

"Thou hast not come alone, Martha," said the youth, half-displeased. "I told thee that the matter I had to say was for thine own ear."

"It is our Ruth. Thou knowest, Mark, that she may not be left alone, for we fear her return to the forest. She is like some ill tamed fawn, that would be apt to leap away at the first well-known sound from the woods. Even now, I fear that we are too much asunder."

"Fear nothing; my sister fondles her infant, and she thinketh not of flight; thou seest I am here to intercept her, were such her intention. Now speak with candour, Martha, and say if thou meant in sincerity, that the visits of the Hartford gallant were less to thy liking, than most of thy friends have believed."

"What I have said cannot be recalled."

“Still it may be repented of.”

“I do not number the dislike I may feel for the young man, among my failings. I am too happy, here, in this family to wish to quit it. And now that our sister — there is one speaking to her at this moment, Mark!”

“’Tis only the innocent,” returned the young man, glancing his eye to the other end of the piazza. “They confer often, together. Whittal hath just come in from the woods, whither he is much inclined to pass an hour, or two, each evening. Thou wast saying that now we have our sister —?”

“I feel less desire to change my abode.”

“Then why not stay with us forever, Martha?”

“Hist —” interrupted his companion, who, though conscious of what she was about to listen to, shrunk with the awkwardness of female nature, from the very declaration she most wished to hear,

"hist — there was a movement. Ah — our Ruth and Whittal are fled!"

"They seek some amusement for the babe — they are near the out-buildings. Then why not accept a right to remain forever —"

"It may not be, Mark," cried the girl, wresting her hand from his grasp; "they are fled!"

Mark reluctantly released his hold, and followed to the spot where his sister had been sitting. She was, in truth, gone, though some minutes passed before even Martha seriously believed that she had disappeared, without an intention of returning. The agitation of both rendered the search ill-directed, and uncertain, and there was perhaps a secret satisfaction in prolonging their interview, even in this vague manner, that prevented them, for some time, from giving the alarm. When that moment did come, it was too late. The fields were examined, the orchards and out-houses thoroughly

searched, without any traces of the fugitives. It would have been useless to enter the forest in the darkness, and all that could be done, in reason, was to set a watch during the night, and to prepare for a more active and intelligent pursuit in the morning.

But long before the sun arose, the small and melancholy party of the fugitives threaded the woods, at such a distance from the valley, as would have rendered the plan of the family entirely nugatory. Conanchet had led the way over a thousand forest knolls, across water-courses, and through dark glens, followed by his silent partner, with an industry that would have baffled the zeal of even those from whom they fled. Whittal Ring, bearing the infant on his back, trudged with unwearied step in the rear. Hours had passed in this manner, and not a syllable had been uttered by either of the three. Once or twice, they had stopped at some spot where

water, limpid as the air, gushed from the rocks, and drinking from the hollows of their hands, the march had been resumed, with the same speechless industry as before.

At length Conanchet paused. He studied the position of the sun, gravely, and took a long and anxious look at the signs of the forest, in order that he might not be deceived in its quarter. To an unpractised eye, the arches of the trees, the leaf-covered earth, and the mouldering logs would have seemed every where the same. But it was not easy to deceive one so trained in the woods. Satisfied equally with the progress he had made, and with the hour, the chief signed to his two companions to place themselves at his side, and took a seat on a low shelf of rock, that thrust its naked head out of the side of a hill.

For many minutes, after all were seated, no one broke the silence. The eye of Narra-Mattah sought the countenance

of her husband, as the eye of woman seeks instruction from the expression of features that she has been taught to revere; but still she spoke not. The innocent laid the patient babe at the feet of its mother, and imitated her reserve.

"Is the air of the woods pleasant to the Honey-suckle, after living in the wigwam of her people?" asked Gonanchet, breaking the long silence. "Can a flower, which blossomed in the sun, like the shade?"

"A woman of the Narragansetts is happiest in the lodge of her husband."

The eye of the chief met her confiding look with affection, and then it fell mild, and full of kindness, on the features of the infant that lay at their feet. There was a minute, during which an expression of bitter melancholy gathered about his brow.

"The Spirit that made the earth," he continued, "is very cunning. He has known where to put the hemlock, and

where the oak should grow. He has left the moose and the deer to the Indian hunter, and he has given the horse and the ox to a Pale-Face. Each tribe hath its hunting grounds, and its game. The Narragansetts know the taste of a clam, while the Mohawks eat the berries of the mountains. Thou hast seen the bright bow which shines in the skies, Narra-Mattah, and knowest how one colour is mixed with another, like paint on a warrior's face. The leaf of the hemlock is like the leaf of the sumach; the ash, the chestnut; the chestnut, the linden; and the linden, the broad-leaved tree which bears the red fruit in the clearing of the Yengeese; but the tree of the red fruit is little like the hemlock! Conanchet is a tall and straight hemlock, and the father of Narra-Mattah is a tree of the clearing, that bears the red fruit. The Great Spirit was angry when they grew together."

The sensitive wife understood, but too well, the current of the chief's thoughts.

Suppressing the pain she felt, however, she answered with the readiness of a woman, whose imagination was quickened by her affections.

"What Conanchet hath said is true. But the Yengeese have put the apple of their own land, on the thorn of our woods, and the fruit is good!"

"It is like that boy," said the chief, pointing to his son; "neither red, nor pale. No, Narra-Mattah; what the Great Spirit hath commanded, even a Sachem must do."

"And doth Conanchet say this fruit is not good?" asked his wife, lifting the smiling boy with a mother's joy before his eyes.

The heart of the warrior was touched. Bending his head, he kissed the babe, with such fondness as parents less stern are wont to exhibit. For a moment, he appeared to have satisfaction in gazing at the promise of the child. But, as he raised his head, his eye caught a glimpse of

the sun, and the whole expression of his countenance changed. Motioning to his wife to replace the infant, on the earth, he turned to her with solemnity, and continued.

“Let the tongue of Narra-Mattah speak without fear. She hath been in the lodges of her father, and hath tasted of their plenty. Is her heart glad?”

The young wife paused. The question brought with it a sudden recollection of all those reviving sensations, of that tender solicitude, and of those soothing sympathies of which she had so lately been the subject. But these feelings soon vanished, for without daring to lift her eyes to meet the attentive and anxious gaze of the chief, she said firmly, though with a voice that was subdued by diffidence,—

“Narrah-Mattah is a wife.”

“Then will she listen to the words of her husband. Conanchet is a chief no longer. He is a prisoner of the Mohicans. Uncas waits for him in the woods!”

Notwithstanding the recent declaration of the young wife, she heard of this calamity, with little of the calmness of an Indian woman. At first, it seemed as if her senses refused to comprehend the meaning of the words. Wonder, doubt, horror and fearful certainty, each in its turn prevailed, for she was too well schooled in all the usages and opinions of the people with whom she dwelt, not to understand the jeopardy in which her husband was placed.

"The Sachem of the Narragansetts, a prisoner of Mohican Uncas!" she repeated, in a low tone, as if the sound of her voice were necessary to dispel some horrible illusion. "No; Uncas is not a warrior to strike Conanchet!"

"Hear my words," said the chief, touching the shoulder of his wife, as one arouses a friend from his slumbers. "There is a Pale-Face in these woods who is a burrowing fox. He hides his head from the Yengeese. When his peo-

ple were on the trail, barking like hungry wolves, this man trusted to a Sagamore. It was a swift chase, and my father is getting very old. He went up a young hickory, like a bear, and Conanchet led off the lying tribe. But he is not a moose. His legs cannot go like running water, forever!"

"And why did the great Narragansett give his life for a stranger?"

"The man is a brave;" returned the Sachem, proudly: "He took the scalp of a Sagamore!"

Again Narra-Mattah was silent. She brooded, in nearly stupid amazement, on the frightful truth.

"The Great Spirit sees that the man and his wife are of different tribes," she at length ventured to rejoin. "He wishes them to become the same people. Let Conanchet quit the woods, and go into the clearings, with the mother of his boy. Her white father will be glad, and Mochican Uncas will not dare to follow."

“Woman, I am a Sachem, and a warrior among my people!”

There was a severe, and cold displeasure in the voice of Conanchet, that his companion had never before heard. He spoke in the manner of a chief to his woman, rather than with that manly softness, with which he had been accustomed to address the scion of the Pale-Faces. The words came over her heart like a withering chill, and affliction kept her mute. The chief himself, sate a moment longer in a stern calmness, and then rising, in displeasure, he pointed to the sun, and beckoned to his companions to proceed. In a time that appeared to the throbbing heart of her who followed his swift footsteps, but a moment, they had turned a little eminence, and, in another minute, they stood in the presence of a party that evidently awaited their coming. This grave groupe consisted only of Uncas, two of his fiercest-looking and most athletic warriors, the divine, and Eben Dudley.

Advancing rapidly to the spot where his enemy stood, Conanchet took his post at the foot of the fatal tree. Pointing to the shadow, which had not yet turned towards the east, he folded his arms on his naked bosom, and assumed an air of haughty unconcern. These movements were made in the midst of a profound stillness.

Disappointment, unwilling admiration, and distrust, all struggled through the mask of practised composure, in the dark countenance of Uncas. He regarded his long hated and terrible foe, with an eye that seemed willing to detect some lurking signs of weakness. It would not have been easy to say whether he most felt respect, or regret, at the faith of the Narragansett. Accompanied by his two grim warriors, the chief examined the position of the shadow, with critical minuteness, and when there no longer existed a pretext for affecting to doubt the punctuality of their captive, a deep

ejaculation of assent, issued from the chest of each. Like some wary judge, whose justice is fettered by legal precedents, as if satisfied there was no flaw in the proceedings, the Mohegan then signed to the white men to draw near.

“Man of a wild and unreclaimed nature!” commenced Meek Wolfe, in his usual, admonitory, and ascetic tones, “the hour of thy existence draws to its end! Judgment hath had rule; thou hast been weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. But Christian charity is never weary. We may not resist the ordinances of Providence, but we may temper the blow to the offender. That thou art here to die, is a mandate decreed in equity, and rendered awful by mystery; but further, submission to the will of Heaven doth not exact. Heathen, thou hast a soul, and it is about to leave its earthly tenement for the unknown world —”

Until now, the captive had listened

with the courtesy of a savage when unexcited. He had even gazed at the quiet enthusiasm, and singularly contradictory passions, that shone in the deep lines of the speaker's face, with some such reverence as he might have manifested at an exhibition of one of the pretended revelations of a prophet of his tribe. But when the divine came to touch upon his condition after death, his mind received a clear, and to him, an unerring clue to the truth. Laying a finger suddenly on the shoulder of Meek, he interrupted him, by saying,—

“My father forgets that the skin of his son is red. The path to the happy hunting grounds of just Indians lies before him.”

“Heathen, in thy words hath the Master Spirit of Delusion and Sin uttered his blasphemies!”

“Hist! — Did my father see that which stirred the bush?”

“It was the viewless wind, idolatrous

and idle minded infant, in the form of adult man!"

"And yet my father speaks to it," returned the Indian, with the grave but cutting sarcasm of his people. "See," he added, haughtily and even with ferocity; "the shadow hath past the root of the tree. Let the cunning man of the Pale Faces stand aside; a Sachem is ready to die!"

Meek groaned audibly, and in real sorrow; for notwithstanding the veil which exalted theories and doctrinal subtleties had drawn before his judgment, the charities of the man were grounded in truth. Bowing to what he believed to be a mysterious dispensation of the will of Heaven, he withdrew to a short distance, and kneeling on a rock, his voice was heard, during the remainder of the ceremonies, lifting its tones in fervent prayer, for the soul of the condemned.

The divine had no sooner quitted the place, than Uncas motioned to Dudley

to approach. Though the nature of the borderer was essentially honest and kind, he was, in opinions and prejudices, but a creature of the times. If he had assented to the judgment, which committed the captive to the mercy of his implacable enemies, he had the merit of having suggested the expedient that was to protect the sufferer from those refinements in cruelty, which the savages were known to be too ready to inflict. He had even volunteered to be one of the agents to enforce his own expedient, though, in so doing, he had committed no little violence to his natural inclinations. The reader will therefore judge of his conduct, in this particular, with the degree of lenity that a right consideration of the condition of the country, and of the usages of the age may require. There was even a relenting and a yielding of purpose in the countenance of this witness of the scene, that was favourable to the safety of the captive, as he now spoke. His address was first to Uncas.

"A happy fortune, Mohegan, something aided by the power of the white men, hath put this Narragansett into thy hands," he said. "It is certain that the Commissioners of the Colony have consented that thou shouldst exercise thy will on his life; but there is a voice in the breast of every human being, which should be stronger than the voice of revenge, and that is the voice of mercy. It is not yet too late to hearken to it. Take the promise of the Narragansett for his faith—take more, take a hostage in this child, which with its mother shall be guarded among the English, and let the prisoner go."

"My brother asketh with a big mind!" said Uncas, drily.

"I know not how, nor why it is I ask with this earnestness," resumed Dudley, "but there are old recollections, and former kindnesses in the face and manner of this Indian! And here, too, is one, in the woman, that I know is tied

to some of our settlements , with a bond nearer than that of common charity— Mohegan , I will add a goodly gift of powder and of muskets, if thou wilt listen to mercy, and take the faith of the Narragansett .”

Uncas pointed with ironical coldness to his captive, as he said—

“ Let Conanchet speak !”

“ Thou hearest , Narragansett . If the man I begin to suspect thee to be, thou knowest something of the usages of the whites . Speak ; wilt swear to keep peace with the Mohegans, and to bury the hatchet in the path, between your villages .”

“ The fire that burnt the lodges of my people turned the heart of Conanchet to stone ,” was the steady answer .

“ Then can I do no more than see the treaty respected ,” returned Dudley , in disappointment . “ Thou hast thy nature and it will have way . The Lord have mercy on thee, Indian , and render thee

such judgment as is meet for one of savage opportunities."

He made a gesture to Uncas that he had done, and fell back a few paces from the tree, his honest features expressing all his concern, while his eye did not refuse to do its duty by closely watching, each movement of the adverse parties. At the same instant, the grim attendants of the Mohegan chief, in obedience to a sign, took their stations on each side of the captive. They evidently awaited, for the last and fatal signal, to complete their unrelenting purpose. At this grave moment, there was a pause, as if each of the principal actors pondered serious matter, in his inmost mind.

"The Narragansett hath not spoken to his woman," said Uncas, secretly hoping that his enemy might yet betray some unmanly weakness, in a moment of so severe trial. "She is near."

"I said my heart was stone;" coldly returned the Narragansett.

"See; the girl creepeth like a frightened fowl, among the leaves. If my brother Conanchet will look, he will see his beloved."

The countenance of Conanchet grew dark, but it did not waver.

"We will go among the bushes, if the Sachem is afraid to speak to his woman, with the eyes of a Mohican on him. A warrior is not a curious girl, that he wishes to see the sorrow of a chief!"

Conanchet felt, hurriedly, for some weapon that might strike his enemy to the earth, and then a low murmuring sound as his elbow, stole so softly on his ear, as suddenly to divert the tempest of passion.

"Will not a Sachem look at his boy!" demanded the suppliant. "It is the son of a great warrior; why is the face of his father so dark on him!"

Narrah-Mattah had drawn near enough to her husband, to be within reach of his hand. With extended arms she held the

pledge of their former happiness towards the chief, as if to beseech a last and kindly look of recognition and love.

“Will not the great Narragansett look at his boy!” she repeated, in a voice that sounded like the lowest notes of some touching melody. “Why is his face so dark, on a woman of his tribe?”

Even the stern features of the Mohegan Sagamore showed that he was touched. Beckoning to his grim attendants to move behind the tree, he turned and walked aside, with the noble air of a savage, when influenced by his better feelings. Then light shot into the clouded countenance of Conanchet. His eyes sought the face of his stricken and grieved consort, who mourned less for his danger, than she grieved for his displeasure. He received the boy from her hands, and studied his features long and intently. Beckoning to Dudley, who alone gazed on the scene, he placed the infant in his arms.

“See;” he said pointing to the child;

"it is a blossom of the clearings. It will not live in the shade."

He then fastened a look on his trembling partner. There was a husband's love in the glance. "Flower of the open land!" he said "the Manitou of thy race will place thee in the fields of thy fathers. The sun will shine upon thee, and the winds from beyond the salt lake will blow the clouds into the woods. A Just and Great Chief cannot shut his ear to the Good Spirit of his people. Mine calls his son to hunt among the braves, that have gone on the long path; thine points another way. Go, hear his voice and obey. Let thy mind be like a wide clearing; let all its shadows be next the woods; let it forget the dream it dreamt among the trees. 'T is the will of the Manitou."

"Conanchet asketh much of his wife; her soul is only the soul of a woman!"

"A woman of the Pale-Faces; now let her seek her tribe. Narra-Mattah thy people speak strange traditions. They say that

one just man died for all colours. I know not. Conanchet is a child among the cunning, and a man with the warriors. If this be true he will look for his woman and boy, in the happy hunting grounds, and they will come to him. There is no hunter of the Yengeese that can kill so many deer. Let Narra-Mattah forget her chief till that time, and then, when she calls him by name, let her speak strong, for he will be very glad to hear her voice again. Go; a Sagamore is about to start on a long journey. He takes leave of his wife with a heavy spirit. She will put a little flower of two colours before her eyes, and be happy in its growth. Now let her go. A Sagamore is about to die."

The attentive woman caught each slow and measured syllable, as one trained in superstitious legends would listen to the words of an oracle. But accustomed to obedience and bewildered with her grief, she hesitated no longer. The head of Narrah-Mattah sunk on her bosom, as

she left him, and her face was buried in her robe. The step with which she past Uncas was so light as to be inaudible; but when he saw her tottering form, turning swiftly, he stretched an arm high in the air. The terrible mutes just showed themselves from behind the tree, and vanished. Conanchet started, and it seemed as if he were about to plunge forward; but recovering himself, by a desperate effort, his body sunk back against the tree, and he fell in the attitude of a chief seated in council. There was a smile of fierce triumph on his face, and his lips evidently moved. Uncas did not breathe, as he bent forward to listen; —

“ Mohican, I die before my heart is soft!” uttered, firmly, but with a struggle, reached his ears. Then came two long and heavy respirations. One was the returning breath of Uncas, and the other the dying sigh of the last Sachem of the broken and dispersed tribe of the Narragansetts.

CHAPTER XI.

“ Each lonely scene shall thee restore ;
For thee the tear be duly shed :
Belov'd till life could charm no more ;
And mourn'd till pity's self be dead.

Collins

An hour later and the principal actors in the foregoing scene had disappeared. There remained only the widowed Narrah Mattah, with Dudley, the Divine, and Whittal Ring.

The body of Conanchet still continued, where he had died, seated like a chief in council. The daughter of Content and Ruth had stolen to its side, and she had taken her seat, in that species of dull woe, which so frequently attends

the first moments of any unexpected and overwhelming affliction. She neither spoke, sobbed, nor sorrowed, in any way that grief is wont to affect the human system. The mind seemed palsied, though a withering sense of the blow was fearfully engraven on every lineament of her eloquent face. The colour had deserted her cheeks, the lips were bloodless, while, at moments, they quivered convulsively, like the tremulous movement of the sleeping infant, and, at long intervals, her bosom heaved, as if the spirit within, struggled heavily to escape from its earthly prison. The child lay unheeded at her side, and Whittal Ring had placed himself on the opposite side of the corpse.

The two agents, appointed by the colony to witness the death of Conanchet, stood near, gazing mournfully on the piteous spectacle. The instant the spirit of the condemned man had fled, the prayers of the divine had ceased, for he believed that then the soul had gone

to judgment. But there was more of human charity, and less of that exaggerated severity in his aspect, than was ordinarily seated in the deep lines of his austere countenance. Now that the deed was done, and the excitement of his exalted theories had given way to the more positive appearance of the result, he might even have moments of harassing doubts, concerning the lawfulness of an act that he had hitherto veiled under the forms of a legal and necessary execution of justice. The mind of Eben Dudley vacillated with none of the subtleties of doctrine, or of law. As there had been less exaggeration in his original views of the necessity of the proceeding, so was there more steadiness in his contemplation of its fulfilment. Feelings, they might be termed emotions, of a different nature troubled the breast of this resolute, but justly disposed, borderer.

“This hath been a melancholy visitation of necessity, and a severe manifes-

tation of the fore-ordering will," said the Ensign, as he gazed at the sad spectacle before him. "Father and son have both died, as it were, in my presence, and both have departed for the world of spirits, in a manner to prove the inscrutableness of Providence. But dost not see, here, in the face of her who looketh like a form of stone, traces of a countenance that is familiar?"

"Thou hast allusion to the consort of Capt. Content Heathcote?"

"Truly, to her only. Thou art not, reverend sir, of sufficient residence at the Wish-Ton-Wish, to remember that lady in her youthfulness. But to me, the hour when the Captain led his followers into the wilderness, seemeth but as a morning of the past season. I was then active in limb, and something idle, in reflection and discourse; it was in that journey, that the woman who is now the mother of my children and I first made acquaintance. I have seen many comely

females in my time, but never did I look on one so pleasant to the eye, as was the consort of the captain until the night of the burning. Thou hast often heard the loss she then met, and, from that hour, her beauty hath been that of the October leaf, rather than its loveliness in the season of fertility. Now look on the face of this mourner, and say if there be not here such an image, as the water reflects from the overhanging bush. In verity, I could believe it was the sorrowing eye and bereaved look of the mother herself!"

"Grief hath struck its blow, heavily, on this unoffending victim," uttered Meek, with great and subdued softness in his manner. "The voice of petition must be raised in her behalf, or—"

"Hist! — there are some in the forest; I hear the rustling of leaves!"

"The voice of him, who made the earth, whispereth in the winds; his breath is the movement of nature!"

"Here are living men! — But, happily

the meeting is friendly, and there will be no further occasion for strife. 'The heart of a father is sure as ready eye and swift foot.'

Dudley suffered his musket to fall at his side, and both he and his companion stood in attitudes of decent composure, to await the arrival of those who approached. The party that drew near, arrived on the side of the tree opposite to that on which the death of Conanchet had occurred. The enormous trunk and swelling roots of the pine concealed the groupe, at its feet, but the persons of Meek and the Ensign were soon observed. The instant they were discovered, he who led the new comers bent his footsteps in that direction.

"If, as thou hast supposed, the Naragansett hath again led her thou hast so long mourned, into the forest," said Submission, who acted as guide to those who followed, "here are we, at no great distance from the place of his resort. It

was near yon rock, that he gave the meeting with the bloody minded Philip, and the place were I received the boon of an useless and much afflicted life, from his care, is within the bosom of that thicket, which borders the brook. This minister of the Lord, and our stout friend the Ensign, may have farther matter to tell us of his movements."

The speaker had stopped within a short distance of the two he named, but still on the side of the tree opposite to that where the body lay. He had addressed his words to Content, who also halted to await the arrival of Ruth, who came in the rear, supported by her son, and attended by Faith and the physician, all equipped like persons engaged in a search through the forest. A mother's heart had sustained the feeble woman, for many a weary mile, but her steps had begun to drag, shortly before they so happily fell upon the signs of human beings, near the spot where they now met the two agents of the colony.

Notwithstanding the deep interest which belonged to the respective pursuits of the individuals, who composed these two parties, the interview was opened with no lively signs of feeling on either side. To them, a journey in the forest possessed no novelties, and after traversing its mazes for a day, the newly arrived encountered their friends, as men meet on more beaten tracks, in countries where roads unavoidably lead them to cross each other's paths. Even the appearance of Submission, in front of the travellers, elicited no marks of surprise in the unmoved features of those who witnessed his approach. Indeed the mutual composure of one who had so long concealed his person, and of those who had more than once seen him in striking and mysterious situations, might well justify a belief that the secret of his presence, near the valley, had not been confined to the family of the Heathcotes. This fact is rendered still more probable,

by the recollection of the honesty of Dudley, and of the professional characters of the two others.

“We are on the trail of one fled, as the truant fawn seeketh again the covers of the woods,” said Content. “Our hunt was uncertain, and it might have been vain, so many feet have lately crossed the forest, were it not that Providence hath cast our route on that of our friend, here, who hath had reason to know the probable situation of the Indian camp. Hast seen aught of the Sachem of the Narragansetts, Dudley? and where are those thou ledst against the subtle Philip? That thou fell upon his party, we have heard; though further than thy general success we have yet to learn. The Wompanoag escaped thee?”

“The wicked agencies that back him in his designs, profited the savage in his extremity. Else would his fate have been that which I fear a far worthier spirit hath been doomed to suffer.”

“Of whom dost speak? — but it mattereth not. We seek our child; she, whom thou hast known, and whom thou hast so lately seen, hath again left us. We seek her in the camp of him who hath been to her — Dudley hath seen aught of the Narragansett Sachem?”

The Ensign looked at Ruth, as he had once before been seen to gaze on the sorrowing features of the woman, but he spoke not. Meek folded his arms on his breast, and seemed to pray inwardly. There was, however, one who broke the silence, though his tones were low and menacing.

“It was a bloody deed!” muttered the innocent. “The lying Mohican hath struck a Great Chief, from behind. Let him dig the prints of his moccasin from the earth, with his nails, like a burrowing fox, for there’ll be one on his trail, before he can hide his head. Nipsett will be a warrior the next snow!”

“There speaks my witless brother

er!" exclaimed Faith, rushing ahead — she recoiled, covered her face with her hands, and sunk upon the ground, under the violence of the surprise that followed.

Though time moved with his ordinary pace, it appeared to those who witnessed the scene which succeeded, as if the emotions of many days were collected within the brief compass of a few minutes. We shall not dwell on the first harrowing and exciting moments of the appalling discovery.

A short half hour served to make each person acquainted with all that it was necessary to know. We shall therefore transfer the narrative to the end of that period.

The body of Conanchet still rested against the tree. The eyes were open, and though glazed in death, there still remained about the brow, the compressed lips, and the expansive nostrils, much of that lofty firmness, which had sustained him in the last trial of life.

The arms were passive at its sides, but one hand was clenched, in the manner with which it had so often grasped the tomahawk, while the other had lost its power, in a vain effort to seek the place in the girdle, where the keen knife should have been. These two movements had probably been involuntary, for, in all other respects, the form was expressive of dignity and repose. At its side, the imaginary Nipsett still held his place, menacing discontent betraying itself, through the ordinary dull fatuity of his countenance.

The others present were collected around the mother and her stricken child. It would seem that all other feelings were, for the moment, absorbed in apprehensions for the latter. There was much reason to dread that the recent shock had suddenly deranged some of that fearful machinery which links the soul to the body. This dreaded effect however was more to be apprehended by a general

apathy and failing of the system, than by any violent and intelligible symptom.

The pulses still vibrated, but it was heavily, and like the irregular and faltering evolutions of the mill, which the dying breeze is ceasing to fan. The pallid countenance was fixed in its expression of anguish. Colour there was none; even the lips resembling the unnatural character which is given by images of wax. Her limbs, like her features, were immovable; and yet there was, at moments, a working of the latter, which would seem to imply not only consciousness, but vivid and painful recollections of the realities of her situation.

“This surpasseth my art,” said Dr. Ergot, raising himself from a long and silent examination of the pulse; “there is a mystery in the construction of the body, which human knowledge hath not yet unveiled. The currents of existence are sometimes frozen, in an incomprehensible manner, and this I conceive to

be a case that would confound the most learned of our art, even in the oldest countries of the earth. It hath been my fortune to see many arrive, and but few depart from this busy world, and yet do I presume to foretel, that here is one destined to quit its limits, ere the natural number of her days has been filled !”

“ Let us address ourselves in behalf of that which shall never die, to Him, who hath ordered the event, from the commencement of time,” said Meek, motioning to those around him to join in prayer.

The divine then lifted up his voice, under the arches of the forest, in an ardent, pious and eloquent petition. When this solemn duty was performed, attention was again bestowed on the sufferer. To the surprise of all, it was found that the blood had revisited her face, and that her radiant eyes were lighted with an expression of brightness and peace. She even motioned to be raised, in order that those near her person, might be better seen.

"Dost know us?" asked the trembling Ruth. "Look on thy friends, long mourned and much-suffering daughter! 'Tis she who sorrowed over thy infant afflictions, who rejoiced in thy childish happiness, and who hath so bitterly wept thy loss, that craveth the boon. In this awful moment recal the lessons of youth. Surely, surely, the God that bestowed thee, in mercy, though he hath led thee on a wonderful and inscrutable path, will not desert thee, at the end! Think of thy early instruction, child of my love; feeble of spirit, as thou art, the seed may yet quicken, though it hath been cast where the glory of the promise hath so long been hid."

"Mother!" said a low, struggling voice, in reply. The word reached every ear, and it caused a general and breathless attention. The sound was soft and low, perhaps infantile, but it was uttered without accent and clearly.

"Mother--why are we in the forest?"

continued the speaker. "Have any robbed us of our home, that we dwell beneath the trees?"

Ruth raised a hand, imploringly, for none to interrupt the illusion.

"Nature hath revived the recollections of her youth," she whispered. "Let the spirit depart, if such be his holy will, in the blessedness of infant innocence!"

"Why do Mark and Martha, stay!" continued the other. "It is not safe, thou knowest mother, to wander far in the woods; the heathen may be out of their towns, and one cannot say what evil chance might happen to the indiscreet."

A groan struggled from the chest of Content, and the muscular hand of Dudley compressed itself on the shoulder of his wife, until the breathlessly attentive woman withdrew, unconsciously, with pain.

"I've said as much to Mark, for he doth not always remember thy warnings, mother; and those children do so love to

wander, together!—but Mark is in common, good; do not chide, if he stray too far—mother thou wilt not chide!

The youth turned his head, for even at that moment, the pride of young manhood prompted him to conceal his weakness.

“Hast prayed to day, my daughter?” said Ruth, struggling to be composed. “Thou should’st not forget thy duty to his blessed name, even though we are houseless in the woods.”

“I will pray now, mother,” said the creature of this mysterious hallucination, struggling to bow her face into the lap of Ruth. Her wish was indulged, and for a minute, the same low childish voice was heard, distinctly repeating the words of a prayer, adapted to the earliest period of life. Feeble as were the sounds, none of their intonations escaped the listeners, until near the close, when a species of holy calm seemed to absorb the utterance. Ruth raised the form of her child, and saw that the features bore the

placid look of a sleeping infant. Life played upon them, as the flickering light lingers on the dying torch. Her dove-like eyes looked up into the face of Ruth, and the anguish of the mother was alleviated by a smile of intelligence and love. The full and sweet organs next rolled from face to face, recognition and pleasure accompanying each change. On Whittal they became perplexed and doubtful, but when they met the fixed, frowning, and still commanding eye of the dead chief, their wandering ceased forever. There was a minute, during which, fear, doubt, wildness, and early recollections struggled for the mastery. The hands of Narra-Mattah trembled, and she clung convulsively to the robe of Ruth.

“Mother! — Mother! — ” whispered the agitated victim of so many conflicting emotions, “I will pray again—An evil Spirit, besets me.”

Ruth felt the force of her grasp, and heard the breathing of a few words of petition; after which the voice was mute,

and the hands relaxed their hold. When the face of the nearly insensible parent was withdrawn, to the others the dead appeared to gaze at each other, with a mysterious and unearthly intelligence. The look of the Narragansett was still, as in his hour of pride, haughty, unyielding and filled with defiance; while that of the creature, who had so long lived in his kindness was perplexed, timid, but not without a character of hope. A solemn calm succeeded, and when Meek raised his voice again, in the forest, it was to ask the Omnipotent Ruler of Heaven and Earth to sanctify his dispensation to those who survived.

The changes which have been wrought, on this continent, within a century and a half, are very wonderful. Cities have appeared where the wilderness then covered the ground, and there is good reason to believe that a flourishing town now stands, on, or near, the spot where Conanchet met his death. But, notwithstanding so much activity has prevailed

in the country, the valley of this legend remains but little altered. The hamlet has increased to a village; the farms possess more of the air of cultivation; the dwellings are enlarged, and are somewhat more commodious; the churches are increased to three; the garrisoned houses, and all other signs of apprehension from violence, have long since disappeared; but still the place is secluded, little known, and strongly impressed with the marks of its original sylvan character.

A descendant of Mark and Martha is, at this hour, the proprietor of the estate, on which so many of the moving incidents of our simple tale were enacted. Even the building, which was the second habitation of his ancestor, is in part standing, though additions and improvements have greatly changed its form. The orchards, which in 1675, were young and thrifty, are now old and decaying. The trees have yielded their character for excellence, to those vari-

ties of the fruit, which the soil and the climate have since made known to the inhabitants. Still they stand, for it is known that fearful scenes occurred beneath their shades, and there is a deep moral interest attached to their existence.

The ruins of the block-house, though much dilapidated and crumbling, are also visible. At their foot is the last abode of all the Heathcotes, who have lived and died in that vicinity, for near two centuries. The graves of those of later times, are known by tablets of marble; but nearer to the ruin are many whose monuments, half concealed in the grass, are cut in the common coarse free-stone of the country.

One, who took an interest in the recollection of days long gone, had occasion a few years since to visit the spot. It was easy to trace the births and deaths of generations, by the visible records, on the more pretending monuments of those interred within a hundred years. Beyond that period, research became

difficult and painful. But his zeal was not to be easily defeated.

To every little mound, one only excepted, there was a stone, and on each stone, illegible as it might be, there was an inscription. The undistinguished grave it was presumed, by its size and its position, was that which contained the bones of those who fell in the night of the burning. There was another, which bore, in deep letters, the name of the Puritan. His death occurred in 1680. At its side, there was a humble stone on which, with great difficulty, was traced the single word 'Submission.' It was impossible to ascertain whether the date was 1680, or 1690. The same mystery remained about the death of this man, as had clouded so much of his life. His real name, parentage, or character, further than they have been revealed in these pages, was never traced. There still remains, however, in the family of the Heathcotes, an orderly book of a troop of horse, which tradition says had some connexion with his

fortunes. Affixed to this defaced and imperfect document, is a fragment of some diary, or journal, which has reference to the condemnation of Charles I. to the scaffold.

The body of Content lay near his infant children, and it would seem that he still lived, in the first quarter of the last century. There was an aged man, lately in existence, who remembers to have seen him, a white-headed patriarch, reverend by his years, and respected for his meekness and justice. He had passed nearly, or quite, half-a-century unmarried. This melancholy fact was sufficiently shewn by the date on the stone of the nearest mound. The inscription denoted it to be "the grave of Ruth, daughter of George Harding of the colony of Massachusetts-bay and wife of Capt. Content Heathcote." She died in the autumn of 1675, with, as the stone reveals, "a spirit broken for the purposes of earth, by much family affliction, though with hopes justified by the covenant, and her faith in the Lord."

The divine, who lately officiated, if he do not now officiate in the principal church of the village, is called the Rev. Meek Lamb. Though claiming a descent from him who ministered in the temple, at the period of our tale, time and intermarriages have produced this change in the name, and happily some others in doctrinal interpretations of duty. When this worthy servant of the church found the object which had led one, born in another state, and claiming descent from a line of religionists who had left the common country of their ancestors, to worship in still another manner, had an interest in the fortunes of those who first inhabited the valley, he found a pleasure in aiding the inquiries. The abodes of the Dudleys and Rings were numerous, in the village, and its environs. He showed a stone, surrounded by many others that bore these names, on which was rudely carved, "I am Nipsett, a Narragansett; the next snow I shall be a warrior!" There is a rumour, that though the

hapless brother of Faith gradually returned to the ways of civilized life, he had frequent glimpses of those seducing pleasures, which he had once enjoyed in the freedom of the woods.

Whilst wandering through these melancholy remains of former scenes, a question was put to the divine concerning the place where Conanchet was interred. He readily offered to shew it. The grave was on the hill, and distinguished only by a head-stone that the grass had concealed from former search. It merely bore the words "the Narragansett."

"And this at its side?" asked the inquirer. "Here is one also, before unnoted."

The divine bent in the grass, and scraped the moss from the humble monument. He then pointed to a line, carved with more than usual care. The inscription simply said, —

"The Wept of Wish-Ton-Wish."

THE END.

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